

*F. H. The
Fair Hibernian*

T H E

FAIR HIBERNIAN.

VOL. I.

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THE

FAIR HIBERNIAN

VOL. I

T H E
FAIR HIBERNIAN.

What Ignorance shall think, or Malice say,
To me are Trifles,—if the knowing few,
Who can see Faults, but can see Beauties too,
Applaud that Genius which themselves partake.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOLUME THE FIRST.

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L O N D O N:

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FOR G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.  
M,DCC,LXXXIX.



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fluence of cold philosophy, pretended to af-

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vaded by capricious jealousy, and then in-  
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dear sister, I have not with the cruel in-  
fluence of cold philosophy, pretended to af-

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**FAIR HIBERNIAN.**

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solation. I have not, with the cruel influence of cold philosophy, pretended to assign reasons why you should not grieve for the loss of an amiable husband; first alienated by causeless jealousy, and then snatched away by an early and untimely death! My dear sister, I have left you to reason—I have left you to Heaven! You know as well as I, that grief is unavailing, that it ought to be struggled with; and I am sure you do struggle; but, alas! the feelings of the heart are not always obedient to the dictates of reason: or why cannot I conquer a hopeless passion? Why does my heart revolt against the friendship I have vowed to Valeria O'Bryen? a friendship, she in no way deserves to forfeit. True, she has deeply injured me; but 'twas without design. She knew not that I loved St. Clair; and, O pride forbid that she ever should know it.

You say, very justly, "If the marquis de St. Clair once loved you, you ought now to despise him for his inconstancy: if he never loved you, he never ought to enter your thoughts." Very true, Harriet; very true. But did I ever tell you that I believed

believed I did *right* to love him? No, I am sensible of the folly of my attachment; yet cannot even resolve to overcome it. I am not accustomed to restrain my passions. From the time I came under the care of my uncle and aunt de Villemar, to this moment, I have not been used to the least contradiction. It appears ungenerous—perhaps, in this case, it is ungrateful—to plead the faults of others as an excuse for my own; but I cannot help thinking I should have had more firmness of mind, and more command over my passions, if I had been educated less tenderly.

You reprove me for mentioning people you never heard of, as familiarly as if I thought you acquainted with them: and then you ask—shall I say, you have the cruelty to ask—Who is this Miss O'Bryen? and who is Lady Enmore? I suppose you expect to have your questions answered. Well, I will gratify you. Let us proceed methodically: I know you love method.

When I was in the country last summer, Lady Enmore, her daughter, and Miss O'Bryen, arrived here from Ireland.

Lady Enmore, who it seems passed the greater part of her youth in France, was formerly an acquaintance of my aunt's; and on my return to town I found them extremely intimate.

Her ladyship seems to be about fifty, and is a genteel, pleasing woman.

Lady Mary Enmore is an ill-natured, envious, ugly, deformed little creature: accomplished, sensible, and shrewd; but intolerably self-sufficient.

Miss O'Bryen is—I must confess she is—the finest woman I ever saw. *La belle Irlandoise*! the men here call her.

Her father was an Irish baronet; who being on a visit to some friends in England, in the neighbourhood of one of the Duke of Granville's country seats, fell in love with Lady Charlotte Sedley, only daughter to his Grace. Sir William was handsome, wild, and profuse; qualities which too often engage our thoughtless sex. He soon insinuated himself into Lady Charlotte's affections. Her father, however, rejected his proposals with an irritating haughtiness.

Though



Though gay and thoughtless, he was proud to excess; and could ill support treatment he thought so injurious. Provoking expressions ensued on both sides. The Duke forbade him his house, and commanded his daughter never to see him more.

Lady Charlotte, divided between love and duty, yielded—as is, perhaps, generally the case in such conflicts—to love! and fled to Ireland with Sir William.

After her marriage, she made many ineffectual attempts to reconcile herself to her family. She had no mother to plead for her; and her father was so severe as even to forbid her only brother, Lord Carisbrook, to hold any correspondence with her.

Valeria O'Bryen, the sole offspring of this marriage, was left an orphan, at seventeen. Her parents died within a short time of each other; leaving her tenderly and liberally educated, accustomed to elegance and profusion, without any other dependence than the friendship of Mrs. Chetwynd, Sir William's sister, who is married to a clergyman. However, as they are very worthy



people, and, fortunately for her, have no children of their own, she probably has not much reason to be dissatisfied at her lot. With them she has lived about three years, and is come here merely for amusement, with Lady Enmore, who is Mrs. Chetwynd's very particular friend.

Her ladyship has shewn her friendship very much, at the expence of her discretion, in providing such a companion for her daughter. I imagine, that if Lady Mary had been left to herself, she would not have made so imprudent a choice. Yet if she has not, like me, had every fondly-cherished hope blasted by the charms of this fatal O'Bryen, I know not how she can shut her heart against such an amiable disposition! such seducing manners!

Ever superior to envy, I soon distinguished her. I sought her for my friend. Fool that I was! I could not live without her. It was at the hotel de Villemar, she was first seen by St. Clair.

I tire you, my Harriet. I will quit this subject; but I cannot write on any other. I know not what is become of all those agreeable

agreeable nothings, that used to present themselves to my imagination with so much facility. Adieu.

Ever your affectionate,

LEONORA MARCHMONT.

To Mrs. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

PARIS.

YES, you are in the right, my dear Mrs. Chetwynd; your Valeria has—

“Set the world on fire!”

The ringlets that shade her snowy forehead, are not so numerous as the fighting swains that compose her train;

“While her high pride does scarce descend

“To mark their follies.”

Seriously, my dear Caroline, this lovely creature, although she has not an atom of vanity, is rather too lofty. Allow me to say, that she has rather too much of her father in her disposition. She has lately refused two very advantageous matches: her objections, which I took the liberty to ask, were quite frivolous and romantic. This minute, I expatiate on the enjoyments of a splendid fortune; the next, I threaten her with willow garlands, leading apes, &c. but all to no purpose; she smiles, equally unmoved

unmoved, at both pleas. However, I am not without hopes that the marquis de St. Clair will, in time, find means to warm her icy heart. She seems already to prefer him to all his competitors. I have exerted my utmost influence in his favour; but all I could obtain for him, was a promise of not immediately refusing him.

I told the marquis I should write to Miss O'Bryen's friends: and I ventured to assure him, he would find them his zealous advocates.

Now, I earnestly recommend it to you, to write immediately, and *strongly*, to your niece on this subject. She cannot make one reasonable objection to St. Clair. He bears an universal good character; he is polite, handsome, very rich, and of a noble extraction.

If this marriage takes place, you may leave every thing to my management; and depend upon my acting for your Valeria, as I should for my own daughter.

Your very sincere friend,

MATILDA ENMORE.



To the COUNTESS DOWAGER ENMORE.—FRANCE,

CHETWYND VILLA.

I HAVE great obligations to you, my dear friend, for your care of my lovely child. I have written to her, according to your desire; as strongly too, as I thought I ought. Your ladyship must be sensible there would be an indelicacy in my urging her to marry. Would it not seem as if I wanted to be freed from my charge? How such a thought would wound her high spirit!

I had another reason for not pressing Valeria on this subject: the marquis may not be the kind of man with whom she could think herself happy. I have the highest respect for your ladyship's judgment: without question you are abundantly capable of distinguishing an amiable man; but Valeria, herself, can alone distinguish the man in whose society she might wish to spend her life. A man may be worthy, and not pleasing; he may be pleasing, and yet want something we cannot dispense with. In

short

short, it is impossible to explain the secret magic, that draws our affection to one man more than to another; although it is probable even our partial selves do not discover any extraordinary merit in that dear one. We feel the *tout-en-semble* irresistible, without being able to define the particular charms that attract us. I have often thought that parents do not sufficiently consider the importance of this point. When they have provided a young man of a good family, suitable fortune, and fair character—truly, nothing more is necessary!—and if to these advantages he adds a tolerable share of beauty and agreeableness, the poor girl is downright perverse and obstinate, if she does not immediately fall in love with him. Yet were she to give her heart without their knowledge, to one fifty times more engaging, no reproaches would be thought adequate to her misconduct. Is not this to suppose love quite voluntary? when Heaven knows, it is not always in a young person's power to *preserve* her heart; it never is to *bestow* it. For my part, I think those who love improperly, have many excuses; and

those who do not love where they are importuned, want none.

I insist—pardon the peremptoriness of the expression—I insist upon your leaving my niece entirely to her own direction in the important point before us. O may the only direction superior to her own, be vouchsafed to her! I confess to you, I cannot reconcile myself to the thought of her being settled in France. Both Mr. Chetwynd and I have set our hearts upon this girl. Far from repining at our not having children, we are pleased at a circumstance that will enable us to provide the more amply for our darling.

Never, Lady Enmore, never will that solemn scene be erased from my memory, when the dear child was committed to my care by her last surviving parent.

“My poor Valeria!” said he, gazing on her mournfully, as she knelt, weeping by his bed; “My poor child! I have undone you! I have made you a beggar—a dependant! Must my daughter descend to serve upstart greatness for bread?”

“She

“She never shall!” said I, with firmness.

“Dear Sir William,” softly interposed my Charles, “I beseech you to be calm.

“O let no anxious thought for Valeria dis-

“turb the peace of such an hour as this!

“Be assured, that in me she will find a fa-

“ther. Is not Caroline already her mo-

“ther?”

“My dear, lost Charlotte!” cried my brother, with a heart-rending sigh; “Lost,

“perhaps, to all eternity! I do not de-

“serve to participate your bliss. My fol-

“lies opened an early grave for you! My

“extravagance has beggared your child!”

“You have, indeed, been extravagant

“and unthinking,” said Mr. Chetwynd.

“This is not a time to palliate your errors.

“But I trust that a merciful Being will not

“too severely mark a foolish prodigality;

“that brought its punishment here. As a

“husband, and a father, you were affec-

“tionate and indulgent. A sincere friend

“—a better brother——” cried Charles,

“squeezing his hand, “no man ever was.”

“Your



“Your voice, my dear Chetwynd,” replied Sir William, “is ever the voice of comfort. As a brother, indeed, I have nothing to reproach myself with; not even to the brother, whose too great anxiety for what I have valued too little, has ruined my affairs; whose unkindness, perhaps, has not a little contributed to make that child an orphan.”

“While I live,” said I, scarcely able to speak, “Valeria is not quite an orphan.”

“Give me your hand, my amiable, my beloved Caroline!” said my dying brother; “and yours, my dear Charles.” We each of us put one of our hands in both his. “To you, my friends, I leave Valeria—a sacred trust!—a bequest, of which only minds like yours know the value.”

We gave him the most solemn assurances, that it should be the business of our lives to protect and cherish his Valeria.

Mr. Chetwynd raised the fainting Valeria in his arms.

“Poor child!” said her father.—I cannot give you an idea of the pathos with which he pronounced that—“Poor child!”

“Caroline,

“ Caroline,” said he, after a pause, “ let  
“ her know, as she values my last blessing,  
“ she must never accept any thing from the  
“ duke of Granville. If I must leave my  
“ daughter dependant, I have, at least, the  
“ consolation to think she will depend on  
“ my *own family*.”

I do not, my dear lady Enmore, defend  
such resentful pride at such a time. But he  
probably called to mind, that the gentle  
lady Charlotte had often said,—“ Dear Va-  
“ leria, should you ever see my father, on  
“ your knees intreat him not to curse my  
“ memory!”—and he feared, not without  
reason, that the haughty duke, whom he  
hated, would look upon this mournful sub-  
mission as the abject scheme of want.

It is highly probable that poor lady Char-  
lotte, who too well knew the desperate  
situation of her husband’s affairs, did by this  
means intend to recommend her child to the  
care of her father ; and such conduct in her  
was very natural and laudable. The duke,  
notwithstanding his over-strained pride, and  
detestable implacability, is a man of the most  
respectable character.

My

My dear brother survived this melancholy scene but two days; and I bore my drooping ward from O'Bryen Castle, so many centuries the residence of her ancestors.

Although my esteem for my younger brother, was wholly destroyed by his rigorous exaction of the large sums, his parsimony had enabled him to lend Sir William, yet it was a satisfaction to my family pride, to see him become possessor of O'Bryen Castle, rather than any other creditor.

I shared with my Valeria a satisfaction of a better kind, when I saw that the shattered remains of her father's fortune were sufficient to pay his debts.

The loss of an excellent mother; of a kind, though an imprudent father; the total disappointment of her just expectations of affluence:—These were not gentle trials for a girl of seventeen. But what she felt with sensibility, she bore with fortitude.

O, lady Enmore, she is the pride of my heart! the delight of my life! You know not what I feel at the thought of her being separated from me. But I must not, will not be selfish.

I can

I can by no means agree with your ladyship, that my dear child "has too much of her father in her disposition." She does resemble him; but not *too much*. She has Sir William's lofty soul, generous spirit, high passions, and piercing wit; with a still deeper penetration, and a much more solid judgment than he ever possessed. *His* loftiness was pride: *her's* is dignity. *He* spent a noble fortune in supporting an extravagant parade; and gave to those that asked, rather than to them that wanted: *she* knows how to steer between the extremes of avarice and prodigality; and is careful to exercise her beneficence on proper objects. Her high passions do not govern *her*; her reason governs *them*. *His* wit was not under the check of discretion; it was often ill-natured; a two-edged sword, that at once wounded his neighbour and himself: *her's* is exerted only to amuse, never to give pain; its severity is pointed against *wickedness* and *folly*, not against the *vicious*, or the *weak*: or if she does attack the vicious, the weak her generous tongue never assaulted. Is she not careful to give due praise to the amiable  
part



part of the character? When did Valeria expose a personal defect, a natural imperfection? To conclude, Valeria is her father's picture; but the picture is softer, sweeter, has more grace and elegance than the original.

I intreat your ladyship's forgiveness, if I have seemed over-forward to contradict your sentiments, throughout this tedious letter. You know I am a plain-dealer, and always speak my opinion; a liberty I think very consistent with our friendship.

Your ladyship's obliged,

and affectionate,

CAROLINE CHETWYND.

To

TO MRS. CHETWYND,—IRELAND.

PARIS.

HOW, in the name of every thing marvellous, did St. Clair procure your interest? Sure the man has some familiar spirit to run of his errands! A sylph, I suppose; no spirit less pure dared approach you. Ah! my good lady Enmore, I fancy you are at the bottom of this affair. It does not please my aunt to say who was her intelligencer; yet she accuses me of over-reservedness. How could you say I seemed to want confidence in you? My best, my dearest friend! whom should I confide in but you? You know your Valeria would not assert an untruth; and I assure you, on my honour, the only reason I did not acquaint you with the addressees I am tormented with, was the apprehension of your imputing the communication of them to my vanity. Have you not observed, how fond some women—and perhaps some men too—are of publishing their conquests? I have been made the confidante of a great many young ladies, who

who I am certain had not the least friendship for me; but told me their affairs, merely to let me know they were' admired. When any of my female acquaintance tell me, that my lord, or Mr. such-a-one, is in love with them, but that they would not have it mentioned for the world, I am the only person they would trust to, &c.; I conclude what they mean to say is, "I shall be obliged to you for assisting me to make this matter as much known as possible." And accordingly I have found, that the best way to get rid of such trifling communications, is to keep them secret. Excuse me, if my contempt for a conduct so wretchedly vain and ridiculous, has thrown me rather into the opposite extreme.

You tell me I have a great many lovers I do not mention to you: true,

"I've praters, and suitors, and dangles great  
"store."

But they are a set of insignificants, I have not the conscience to take up your attention with. However, that you may not again call me reserved, we'll just take a look at

two of them, lady Enmore thought me imprudent to refuse:

*En premier lieu*, Monsieur le compte de Chaumont, a tall, lean man, of about fifty; whose greatest ambition, next to pleasing me, is to be thought a gay, foppish young fellow: a fop he is; his bitterest enemy cannot deny it; and if he would be contented to converse only with the blind, he might be thought young, indeed! but *mon vieillard* would please both the eyes and ears, and so, alas! pleases neither; verifying the proverb, "Grasp all, lose all." "What could recommend this count to lady Enmore?" you ask. Be it far from me to display the bad only; though I could find precedents. Let us turn to the bright side; bright it must be owned—Noble descent, large fortune, splendid equipage, court favour. Agreeable trifles these, if joined to some more solid advantages. It is needless to observe, to a person of your just and refined way of thinking, how very little it is in the power of such extrinsic merit in a husband, to secure the happiness of a woman, who pretends to any sentiment.

The



The second choice lady Enmore had made for your Valeria, is the chevalier d'Olonne. He has great connections, is rich, strikingly beautiful, has an infinity of wit and vivacity; and, then, he has *du sang jusqu'aux ongles*; no mortal man could look straight in d'Olonne's face with impunity.

The chevalier is more admired by the ladies than almost any other man in Paris; and certainly owes not a little of his consequence with them to his being a duellist.

That bravery which promises protection to our weakness and timidity, has a just and natural claim to our esteem; but we are too apt to be dazzled by an inconsiderate rashness:

“ For women, born to be controul'd,

“ Stoop to the forward and the bold.”

“ But my Valeria,” you will say, “ what  
“ think you of lady Enmore's present fa-  
“ vourite, the marquis de St. Clair?”

Dear

Dear madam, I have not sufficiently considered the subject: allow me to refer you to my next for an answer.

With unbounded gratitude and love,

Your

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

To

To MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

PARIS.

I DEFERRED communicating my resolutions with regard to the marquis de St. Clair, because I did not well know them myself. I am little less to seek than ever: I cannot bring myself either to accept or refuse him. How like a coquet this! I have hitherto been above the meanness and cruelty of playing with the happiness of a man that loved me: it lowers me very much in my own esteem, to find myself capable of it now.

Were St. Clair to live in Ireland, I believe I should not hesitate a moment; but I cannot bear the thought of settling at such a distance from my dear uncle and you.

You tell me, that to give my hand to the marquis, unless I can give him my whole heart, will be making myself unhappy, and acting a dishonourable part towards him. You likewise justly censure the gross notion, of marrying first, and loving afterwards. I  
entirely

entirely agree with you in all this. I have a reasonable regard for my own happiness; I would rather die than do a dishonourable thing by any one. But here rests the difficulty—Do I, or do I not, love him?”

“Surely, Valeria, it is you must answer that question!”

True, my dear aunt; but honestly, and seriously, I don't know how to answer it. I really think him very amiable; and certainly prefer him—I should not deliberate if I did not—to all the men I ever knew. I like his conversation; except when he importunes me on a certain subject. I am generally best pleased when he is present; and sometimes regret his absence. I pity him more tenderly than I do any other man, to whom I am unhappy enough to give pain.

“Tell me, my heart, if this be love?”

If I form my opinion of that passion, from what I have read of it in novels, I shall be obliged to pronounce my sentiments for the marquis, only—friendship; for I am positive if he were to forsake me this



moment, and even to wed another, I should preserve my reason; yes, and my peace of mind too! Yet, I confess, his dereliction would sensibly pique, and perhaps wound me.

Love, it seems, can observe no faults in—or at least glosses over the faults of—its object. Now, I think St. Clair wants vivacity; and, if the expression be not too bold, fire! There is a soft gentleness in his manners, that would be more suitable to a female character, and might be insipid even in that. I would not be supposed to like roughness; no, not in the least approach to it; but I would have a certain degree of life and spirit accompany the softness of a man.

Thus have I ingenuously told you the state of my heart. Let my dear parents determine for me. I shall remain in suspense till your advice turns the balance; and it is in your power to turn it to which side you please. If you would be happier—and your unbounded tenderness gives me room to imagine you would—in my living with you, speak the word: I shall instantly break  
off

off this match; I shall return to dear Ireland, and my beloved friends. This last resolution will surprize you. To say the truth, I begin---or rather continue—to sigh at our long separation. Besides, my situation here is a little disagreeable. I plainly see lady Mary Enmore hates me; she does not treat me with incivility; but I easily read her sentiments for me notwithstanding. She is unhappy when in the same party with me; imagining the undesired court that is paid me, a slight to her. It must appear vain in me to impute her dislike to envy; yet I don't know how otherwise to account for it. I have carefully examined into my behaviour to her, and flatter myself with impartiality in saying, it deserved a very different return.

Lady Enmore's friendship is almost as unpleasing in its consequences, as her daughter's hatred: she is continually teasing me to marry. “Certainly, Miss O'Bryen, you are very young, and very handsome;”——you'll pardon my repeating her own words——“and yet you may never have such another offer.” This speech was

first made for Chaumont, then d'Olonne, and is now repeated, at least twice a day, for St. Clair. Respect to her more advanced years, and gratitude for her affection, obliges me to attend to her advice; and I don't know any thing more irksome, than to be forced to listen to counsels one is predetermined not to follow. She is undoubtedly a sensible woman; I greatly esteem her, as well on account of her personal merit, as her being your friend; but her disposition, and notions of things, are so opposite to mine, that she is by no means qualified to judge for me in so important a point. Indeed, her ladyship wants a little of my dear aunt's delicacy. Were I to put myself under her direction, I should be quite a female fortune-hunter. How would you like, madam, to see your girl assume such a character; to be continually *on the catch*—allow me that expression—endeavouring to make her fortune by her person?—O, villainous! What a conduct!—It would absolutely be unchaste!

Lady Enmore has just told me, she is resolved not to importune me any more on the  
the

the marquis's account. "I shall leave you  
"entirely to yourself, my dear;" said she,  
"because I am convinced you cannot be  
"such a fool as to refuse him." This is  
an odd way of leaving me to myself. I told  
her I had submitted the matter to your de-  
cision; at which she is very well satisfied.

I have written separately to my dear un-  
cle; not to exclude him from my confi-  
dence, but because I thought customs, laws,  
&c. would have made an awkward appen-  
dix to such a letter as this. I have answered  
his several questions, according to the best  
information I could procure. If I have  
pleased him, I shall be happy; if not, put  
on a saucy look for me, and tell him he  
was mighty curious to give me so much  
trouble about things that did not concern  
either of us.

His and your,

VALERIA O'BRYEN.



TO MRS. WENTWORTH.—ENGLAND.

PARIS.

I HAVE received your letter, my dear sister, and am determined to accept your invitation. I know my uncle and aunt will be unwilling to let me go; but they are too indulgent to deny me, when they find I have set my heart on it. I shall plead my impatience to see you, after a separation of near five years; my desire to behold a brother, of whom I have so slight a remembrance. Here they will tell me, that Sir Edward has given us hopes of seeing him at Paris next summer; and I shall promise to return with him.

I would not, on any account, remain here one month longer, after the conversation I had yesterday with lady Mary Enmore. A restless curiosity—perhaps a latent hope—prompted me to make an enquiry, that has ended, as I might have supposed it would, in despair! I did not dare to mention the marquis's name to

Miss

Miss O'Bryen; her piercing eyes seem to read one's very soul; but, affecting an air of careless vivacity, I ventured to ask lady Mary, if her fair companion was not soon to be married to Monsieur de St. Clair. She replied, "I believe so; Mrs. Chetwynd has been written to." I could hardly stand this shock, though I thought I had fortified my mind against it. I am afraid I did not entirely conceal my emotion from lady Mary: she looked I don't know how at me; she even had the insolence to sneer. I wish to Heaven I had been silent.

I went this morning to lady Enmore's; hoping, by an assumed sprightliness, to destroy lady Mary's suspicions. They were abroad. I waited for them. My spirits began to flag: I sat down to the harpsichord, and played and sung, that I might not *think!* It would not do;—a flood of tears interrupted the song. What should become of me, were they to return at this moment? The reflection instantly roused me. I started up, walked about the room, recovered myself, and sat down again. Turning over the leaves of a music book, I

found some tolerable verses, addressed to lady Mary on her singing:—*ô ciel!* that any man should think it worth his while to flatter lady Mary Enmore! I recollected her behaviour to me yesterday, and could not deny myself the small revenge of scribbling a very satyrical couplet on the opposite page. I hope the lines will vex her. Perhaps she may discover the author, though I endeavoured to disguise my hand. I care not if she does: let her remember her barbarous *sneer*. Why is not Valeria O'Bryen such a creature as lady Mary Enmore, that my mean jealousy might not be wholly without excuse? I hate myself for my ingratitude to the woman, with whom I have interchanged the tenderest professions of friendship. She has long since perceived the melancholy I took so much pains to hide; and her generous and tender assiduity, in consequence of that discovery, wounds me to the soul. She once hinted a desire to know the cause of my uneasiness. You may believe she was the last person I should have chosen for a confidante. I was forced to give her an eva-

five

five answer: she did not press me; but, with a delicacy peculiar to herself, she immediately changed the subject, and has never since renewed it. Why cannot I love her?

It is late; I am fatigued and sleepy; I shall lay down my pen; but I am resolved not to close this letter till I have obtained permission to go to England.

---

Why do they oppose my going? I cannot, will not, stay here. I am disgusted with this place, and every body in it. I hate the woman I ought to love; and I despise myself! I am just returned from visiting Madame de Carignan. She had a good deal of company; Miss O'Bryen was mentioned; every one said something in her favour. My envious heart died within me. I sat sullenly silent, while her praises were echoed from mouth to mouth, as if the company had been in a conspiracy to punish me—as I deserve. O, how has this passion narrowed my mind! There was a



time, when I should have received pleasure from such a conversation. Still I am not so far lost to justice and generosity, but that I am ready to acknowledge, she is the first of women. In short, I praise her myself, but cannot endure to hear her praised by another. Were she censured, I could listen with secret satisfaction, and should warmly defend her, notwithstanding:—what contemptible caprice!

Adieu. I have not yet relinquished the sweet hope of seeing you.

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After two day's struggle I have prevailed. Now you, my gentle sister, would have given up any pleasure, rather than have endured so long a contention: I see there are some advantages attending obstinacy.

You may expect to see me very soon. My uncle intends putting me under the protection of Mr. Domville; who talks of quitting France every day. He is an English gentleman, brother to Lord Linfield, married about two years ago to lady Lucy Melmont,

Melmont, daughter to some Irish Earl. She is very pretty. Ireland is the land of beauty, I think.—I recal the observation—lady Mary Enmore is the most hideous little witch any kingdom ever produced.

How weak I am! Would you believe it,—I can hardly bear the thought of leaving this place, though I would not stay in it for the world: though I die to embrace you, though I long to see the brother on whose praise I have heard you dwell with so much rapture—but, still, St. Clair is here; and, as yet, St. Clair is free.

Not the slightest hint to Sir Edward of the cause of my sudden visit to England. I might have spared the caution. I know I may depend on your prudence.

Adieu, my dear sister.

LEONORA MARCHMONT.

To Mrs. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

PARIS.

AN unexpected incident occasions me to revoke the power I have placed in the hands of my dear uncle and aunt; a power, which not my duty and gratitude only, but my just consciousness of their very superior understandings induced me to give them. I say give; for I can never think that parents should have an affirmative voice in these matters; a negative one they have an incontestible right to; and even of *that* they sometimes make but too cruel a use. I owe more to you than I could to a father and mother. They would have a natural obligation, and a natural desire to support, to love me, and to seek my welfare: all these you do, not necessarily, but freely and voluntarily; which, beyond doubt, very much enlarges my sphere of duty: yet, I frankly own, I could allow you no more than a negative—and I well know you are both too generous to claim even *that*—in an affair of  
such

such momentous concern to the future happiness of my life.

Where has my rambling pen led me? I was going to tell you, that an unexpected incident had fixed my intentions in respect to the marquis. It is, without further preface, as follows:—I have, since I came here, contracted a friendship with a Miss Marchmont, which I believe I might have mentioned to you in some of my former letters. Till within the past month, I had every reason to suppose that this amiable girl amply returned the very lively tenderness I entertained for her; but during that period, there was an unusual coldness and constraint in her behaviour to me. I could not think she was of a fickle disposition, and was positive I had given her no cause of displeasure, so attributed the alteration rather to a melancholy she wished to conceal, than to any diminution of affection to me. From being the liveliest creature imaginable, she became quite the reverse. Convinced that such a change was the effect of some extraordinary misfortune, I was exceedingly alarmed for her. I sought to know the occasion



caſion of her ſorrow; not from an impertinent curioſity, but the better to enable me to pour the ſoothing balm of conſolation on her wounded mind. She avoided my enquiry, which ſeemed to give her ſo much pain, that I extremely condemned myſelf for making it, though conſcious of the juſtiſiableneſs of my intention. I think there are very few ſecrets that can juſtly be denied to perfect friendſhip; but ſome there certainly may be; and I doubted not Miſs Marchmont had proper reaſons for her ſilence: I therefore was not offended, though chagrined at her reſerve. It was her advantage, not my own gratification, I ſought; and ſhe beſt knew whether it was in my power to be ſerviceable to her or not. As far as my friends pleaſe to truſt me, they ſhall find me faithful; but I have no notion of over-earnestly ſoliciting a perſon's confidence, as it always has more the appearance of deſign or curioſity, than of affection. With theſe ſentiments, you may imagine, I was no encroacher on the tenderneſs of my friend. Since ſhe would not put it in my power to comfort, or to adviſe, I endeavoured

voured to amuse her, but was not so happy as to succeed. Still was the dear girl melancholy, and sometimes a little captious, and out of humour. I seemed not to perceive it: they have an ill temper that cannot bear with the infirmities of those they love.

Things continued in this train for some time.

About a week ago she came to spend a morning at Lady Enmore's. During her stay, one of the footmen brought a letter to her ladyship. As there was no company but Miss Marchmont, with whom we are on so intimate a footing, she made some apology, and opened it.

"Who is that from, madam?" asked lady Mary; who has a reasonable portion of curiosity.

"From the marquis de St. Clair."

Miss Marchmont turned *paler*; for she has some natural complexion, in spite of the vile *rouge*. A smelling bottle of mine, which I had shewn her for its remarkable beauty, fell from her hand, and was broken to pieces. I rallied her for being so much discom-

discomposed at such a trifling accident. She instantly laid hold of this pretence, as I had designed she should; apologized for the little mischief she had done me; and observed that her nerves were so weak, that the sudden breaking of any thing always threw her into disorder.

“Well, my dear,” said I, “music will set you to rights in a moment. Lady Mary, will you favour us with a song?”

She immediately complied, which gave my fair friend time to recover herself; and so the matter passed off: but I frequently afterwards revolved it in my mind with great perplexity. That she loved the marquis, was the only probable solution of the mystery: if so, I wondered I had not observed it sooner. But I recollected I had seldom seen them together; and as it is to be supposed her behaviour was carefully guarded at such times, it is not surprizing it deceived one wholly unsuspicious. If she had placed her affections on a man she knew to have attached himself to another, her deep melancholy was no longer unaccountable. I called to mind several circumstances

cumstances which appeared to favour this opinion, particularly her reserve to me;—what could be more natural; who would make a rival a confidante? Pride forbade it, and even generosity; since if I loved St. Clair—and her own passion would incline her to imagine I did—she reduced me to the terrible necessity of either acting an unfeeling and unfriendly part by her, or of making myself wretched. I flatter myself I need not tell you which side, even in that case, I would have taken.

I must break off here, as my lovely countrywoman, lady Lucy Domville, has just called on me, to take a ramble with her. She is going to make some purchases, wherein she politely wishes to profit by my fancy.

Devotedly your

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

To



TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

PARIS.

I SHALL now, my dear madam, resume the subject of yesterday.

It highly concerned me to find out Miss Marchmont's sentiments: but how was I to penetrate them? It required an infinity of address to question her on so nice a subject: I was apprehensive of hurting her delicacy, her pride; of appearing ungenerous; in short, I never was so embarrassed in my life.

In this situation, it was fortunate for me that the marquis was out of town. This leads me to mention the purport of his letter to lady Enmore. It was, to inform her, —or rather me, through her—that he was confined to the country (where he had not intended to stay above four days, at the most) by his attendance on the chevalier d'Aumont, his particular friend, who had been desperately wounded in a duel. You will easily suppose this was accompanied by  
a num-

a number of complaints, compliments, &c. Three days after this letter had annihilated my poor smelling bottle, lady Mary told me, that Miss Marchmont had been enquiring from her, whether I was to be married to St. Clair. "I declare," said her ladyship, "I believe she has a penchant for him herself; she looked so confused while she spoke of him: and don't you remember her disorder the other day, when my mother received his letter?"

"I am astonished a person of your ladyship's discernment, could harbour so ridiculous a supposition: the place I have the honour to hold in Miss Marchmont's friendship, sufficiently confutes your error."

The word *error* offended her; and it was unpolite, or rather, it was inconsiderate in me to use it: she repeated it twice with emphasis; then added, "'Tis true, I am not blessed with the penetration and profound judgment of Miss O'Bryen!" pronouncing my name with a sneer, and tossing her little conceited head. She needed not to have done so; it was an ancient and honourable

able name, ages before her own was drawn from obscurity. With an intention to provoke me, she said, "I request you will excuse my having communicated my observations to you; I really did not know you would be displeased that any body but yourself should presume to love him."

As my talents for wrangling are by no means a match for her's, I thought it most prudent not to answer a speech that might have produced a quarrel.

"If you please, lady Mary," said I, "we shall dismiss this subject; but first, let me conjure you never to divulge your very unjust suspicions, as you may thereby greatly injure my Leonora."

I was heartily sorry the malicious creature had made this discovery, though it confirmed my own surmise. I was now determined to come to an éclaircissement immediately, especially as I found Miss Marchmont intended to go to England with the Domvilles. I did not get an opportunity of conversing with her in private, till the day before yesterday. Thus it was:—I called

called at the *hotel de Villemar*, in the morning. Madame de Villemar, her aunt, told me she was in her own apartment, and was going to send for her. I saved her the trouble, by stepping up stairs myself. I found her weeping: she started, on seeing me.

“Why these tears, my dear Leonora?” asked I, affectionately taking her hand.

“Excuse me,” answered she, averting her face, “I am a little low-spirited this morning.”

“Ah! Miss Marchmont, it is not particularly this morning you are low-spirited; you are always so: yet, miser as you are, you hoard all your griefs within your own breast, and refuse to share them with your friend.”

“No more, Miss O’Byrne; for pity’s sake importune me not.”

“I must, I must, my Leonora. Ah! wherefore do you mock me with the name of friend, while you treat me with a reserve incompatible with friendship?”

I waited her reply. She spoke not: she seemed greatly agitated. I endeavoured to put



put an end to her distress as soon as possible.

—"Permit me, Miss Marchmont, to ask you one question: a question which I intreat and conjure you to answer with sincerity."

"What question?—what would you ask?" she demanded, with fearful hastiness.

"Am I," said I, bashfully looking down, "am I so unfortunate as to be, directly or indirectly, the cause of your—"

"Insulter!" interrupted she, colouring with resentment; and starting from her seat, she moved towards the door with quickness: by a still quicker movement I got between her and it.

"Call me not insulting!" and I threw my arms about her. "Heaven be my witness, I intended not to insult; still less, if possible, to grieve you. Will not you pardon me, Leonora?" Apprehensive that the compassion which was written on my heart, might be legible on my countenance, I reclined my face on her shoulder—unwilling to offend her, even by a look. She burst into tears, and besought me

me to forgive her. Then recollecting herself, as it were, she half pushed me from her, exclaiming, "Too charming creature! Fatal beauty! —Would I had never known you!"

"Ah! form not so cruel a wish. If I have been your rival, 'twas ignorantly and undesignedly. I never ceased to be your friend, nor ever shall. No longer view me in the former odious light; condescend to accept me in the latter. Can you divest yourself of—what you will allow me to call—a narrow pride, and place your confidence in one incapable of abusing it? The marquis de St. Clair must never be any thing to me. Is it in my power——" I stopt, not finding words delicate enough to express my desire of making him her's.

"O, noble-minded Valeria!" cried she; "how little do I merit this generosity! Cast me for ever from a heart too worthy to entertain an affection for such an ingrate! I have hated—I have envied you——"

"Do

“Do not condemn yourself,” answered I, “for the natural effects of the most uncontrollable of all passions. You *have* hated me; does not this imply, that you do not *now* hate me? Endeavour to love me for the future, as sincerely as I shall endeavour to deserve it; and let us mutually forget the injuries we have involuntarily done each other. And remember, Leonora, remember I expect an unlimited trust in my honour, if it be possible for me to serve you; if not, let me ever remain a stranger to the situation of your heart, rather than that heart should feel an addition to its sorrow, by my knowing it.”

The sweet girl was quite oppressed by her too lively gratitude. She wept—she was unable to speak. To relieve her, and perhaps in some measure to relieve myself, for I was exceedingly affected, I abruptly feigned an engagement; and, tenderly embracing, quitted her.

I must now conclude pretty briefly, having already given my pen a greater portion of my time than I can well afford. When

I tell

I tell you that I leave Paris three days hence, you will imagine I must be extremely hurried.

I have saved myself the fatigue of farewell visits, by not mentioning my intention to any one, except Monsieur and Madame de Villemar, Miss Marchmont, lady Enmore, and lady Mary; and Mr. Domville and his lady, whom I am to accompany.

Lady Enmore is to make my apologies to my acquaintance. That the suddenness of my departure may not be thought mysterious, she thinks fit it should appear in consequence of some letters from Ireland.

Her ladyship has said every thing in her power to dissuade me from going; and I really had occasion for all the little address I am mistress of, to keep her from being offended. I could not tell her the true motive that actuated me in this sudden resolve. I was obliged to pretend that my impatience to see my Irish friends would not permit me to stay another winter; and she had no design to return sooner. I should have been happy, I said, to stay with her three or four months longer, only the op-



portunity of going with the Domvilles was so peculiarly tempting. All my rhetoric could hardly reconcile her to parting with me. She is a most sincere and affectionate friend. I do not quit her without regret; and shall never forget what I owe her.

Lady Mary is immeasurably afflicted at losing so agreeable a companion. *Passe pour cela!*

It is scarcely necessary to inform you, that Miss Marchmont does not go to England. Her uncle and aunt, who are excessively fond of her, are delighted at her changing her mind, though they do not know why she did so.

She has engaged me to visit a sister of her's of whom she has given me an interesting history, which I shall communicate to you when I have more leisure.

I do not expect to see the marquis before I go, as the chevalier d'Aumont is considerably worse. Poor St. Clair! I grieve to think what his gentle nature may suffer on my account. I sincerely hope his passion will expire, when he no longer beholds its object. I have desired Leonora to assure him

him of my gratitude and unalterable esteem; but at the same time to tell him, that was all he had ever to expect from me. You will readily perceive, that the reason I chose to make her the bearer of this message, rather than lady Enmore, was, because it would naturally lead to an intimacy between them. I please myself with thinking, the attention he will experience from her, joined to her merit, her beauty, her *agréments*, will, in some little time, accomplish what I so ardently wish.

Adieu, adieu, my dearest madam. I have not time to re-peruse this long letter.

Ever your dutiful, &c.

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

Direct your next to lord Linfield's, London.

TO LORD METHUEN.—LONDON.

MARCHMONT-HOUSE.

DAME Prudence took me by the hand, and led me here to look after my estate. I never supposed she had any thing further in view: but mark her treachery. Who could have suspected it in such a grave gentlewoman? She had most devilishly contrived and complotted with the gods Hymen and Cupid, to introduce me to the acquaintance of Miss Ormsby. A merchant's daughter!—'tis true;—but what of that?—She has forty thousand pounds!

Shall I tell you all how and about it?—I will.

Mr. Matthias Ormsby—it is necessary, for the exactitude of the thing, that you should be told his christian name—Mr. Matthias Ormsby, a London merchant, has two fair daughters, videlicet, Emily and Hannah: the former, it pleased Sir James Conway to take unto him, in quality of wife; leaving the latter for me, his friend,  
and

and brother baronet. "Very kind, and "confiderate," you will fay, "that he did "not take both." Why fo it was; and to make my acknowledgments, I pofted to his manfion-houfe, which is but three miles from my own, the fecond day after I came down—was moft hofpitably received by Sir James—introduced to his bride, and her fifter—requested to accept a general invitation, of which I have frequently availed myfelf; my houfe being then, as at prefent, utterly deftitute of inhabitants, fave only felf and fervants—and I am entirely of opinion, that "it is not good for man to "be alone."

In the courfe of my vifits, Sir James has fometimes dropt hints, that I fhould do well to countenance his example, and clear my eftate.

What does your lordfhip think of this advice? My eftate, you know, is worth about ten thoufand a year. My father involved it extremely. I have been clearing ever fince I came to it; and have now reduced the debts to thirty-fix thoufand

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pounds.



pounds. By living within the bounds I have prescribed to myself, I shall pay off the whole in less than ten years. But suppose I take a more expeditious method.—Miss Ormsby's fortune will more than settle my affairs; and her father will likewise leave her a considerable sum at his death. I assure you, the œconomy of this scheme has struck me forcibly.

May I boast to you, that Miss Ormsby treats me with distinction. If she did not, perhaps I should not think of her. The dear charmer should consider, however, that—

“ A heart by kindness only gain'd,

“ Will a dear conquest prove;

“ And, to be kept, must be maintain'd

“ At vast expence of love.”

Call it vanity, or gratitude, which you will, Methuen; but assuredly there is something irresistibly engaging in being beloved. When a woman seems ready to jump into one's arms, indeed, 'tis quite another matter. I admire her, who

“ — In

“ — In striving to hide,

“ — Reveals all her flame.”

This is exactly Hannah's case. She fixes her mild eyes, filled with dying langour, on my face; instantly draws them off, with great confusion, when their glances meet mine. She practises a number of other pretty contrivances; so natural to her wily sex, when they would ensnare our hearts.

Doubtless you expect a description of my fair one:—here it follows then.

She is tall, slender, and straight. But to shew you my impartiality—a rare virtue in a lover!—I must confess, her limbs are rather coarse, than delicate; stiff, than elastic; but, on the whole, she has something very genteel and *degagée* in her appearance.——  
Now for her face—

“ O, face, industriously contriv'd by Heaven,

“ To fix my eyes, and captivate my soul!”

Shall I dissect her features? Perchance they will not bear it; though they do very well together, let me tell you. Her fore-

head, cheeks, nose, and chin, are unexceptionable. O, most unlover-like, thus negatively to praise them in the aggregate! I should have separated them, and bestowed a poetical simile or two on each. Well, to make amends for my negligence—

“ Her radiant eyes,

“ The bright, celestial blue that paints the skies.”

By the way, I have no passion for blue eyes: they are generally soft, sometimes bright, but almost always want life.

Her mouth is rather wide; but her teeth are white, and even. Her hair is a pretty light-brown, very thick and glossy: her skin, white as the new-blown lily; but her complexion not blooming enough for my taste. There is a sweetness and sensibility in her looks, with a tincture of indolence.

Her understanding is good enough for her sex; but she possesses not a single spark of what we call wit. I cannot say I lament that, as I think wit a most unamiable and dangerous quality, when it is not joined to  
an

an uncommon strength of judgment, and goodness of heart.

A note from lady Conway—I fly to attend them.

## EDWARD MARCHMONT.



TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—  
MARCHMONT-HOUSE.

LONDON.

MARCHMONT, I tell you frankly, I do not approve your precipitate choice. 'Tis a prudent one with regard to fortune; but as to birth, I could wish you had been a little more nice. I have been making enquiries about Miss Ormsby's family. Her father, I find, has the character of a worthy, honest, rich man; but he may have dropt from "the heavens above," or—more applicable, indeed—ascended from "the earth beneath," for any thing I know to the contrary; for, in spite of my strictest researches, I cannot possibly learn he had a single forefather. Mrs. Ormsby's family, it seems, is tolerably genteel.

Had I no knowledge of your disposition, except what your letter conveyed to me, I should certainly conclude you were one of the greatest misers on earth; and so impute your—I believe I misapply the word—*passion*

*son* for this girl, wholly to avaricious motives: but I well know you are greatly above such meanness. Your estate is incumbred; yet it surely is a competence; nay, much more than a competence: and he who possessing enough, sighs for more, is a despicable fellow! The votaries of Plutus are more wretched, and far more contemptible, than those of any other god in the whole Pagan theology.

There is still another consideration—of which I apprehend you have not been sufficiently mindful—of more weight than either high descent or riches; I mean the interests of the heart. You call yourself a lover; yet there is not a sentence throughout your letter, that appears to me to favour of a passion, of which I am bold enough to think myself an excellent judge. You will allow me, likewise, to know something of matrimony, as I have been almost four years a husband; and believe me, Marchmont, that love—love alone can make that state desirable. You have often laughed at what you call my romantic notions: but I still maintain them, and shall to the end of  
D. 6 my

my days, in defiance of all your lively rail-  
lery. I know you have the many on your  
side. I care not: I am by no means  
ashamed of being singularly in the right.  
What! because most minds are too dull, or  
too coarse, to feel the lively and delicate  
sensations, that warm and purify my heart;  
must I, therefore, give up an opinion, found-  
ed, not on imagination, but experience; and  
joining mine to the vulgar voice, call love  
romantic; its joys evanescent and delusive?  
No, I neither can nor will, conceal from  
myself or others, that I am supremely hap-  
py; and that it is love which makes me so.

If I thought you one of those grovelling  
wretches, into whose narrow souls love can-  
not force an entrance, I should not have  
touched on this subject; but I am convinced  
your generous, enlarged mind, is capable  
of entertaining this passion in its utmost  
sublimity; and that the insensibility you  
have preserved to your twenty-fourth year,  
is wholly accidental: or, perhaps, in a  
great measure owing to the quickness of  
your penetration, which enables you so  
easily to develope the insignificance, which,  
I ac-

I acknowledge, does but too much abound in the female character.

Miss Ormsby, you tell me, has sense enough for her *sex*; you should rather have said, for her *education*: for certainly, Sir Edward, it is false and illiberal to suppose the natural capacities of women, much—if at all—inferior to our own. Undeniably there are numbers of them very triflers. But may not the same be said of the men? And how many ladies do we see, overcoming all the disadvantages they have to contend with, make a distinguished figure in conversation? Let me ask you—I know you will smile at the question—Did you ever hear lady Methuen make an observation you would have blushed to pronounce?

I am running into a greater length than I intended when I began this letter. I designed only to put you upon considering, whether the personal attractions of Miss Ormsby will make her an agreeable companion for life? You don't seem to be in very violent raptures with them, even at present: and I caution you not to suppose that your inclination will be lasting, because

it



it is moderate;—it is in its own nature perishable. An attachment founded entirely on outside beauty, can never hold a man of sense—nor, perhaps, any man—for an length of time.

I am confident you have no sentiments for Miss Ormsby, that pity does not inspire. You see her unhappy;—know yourself the cause, and wish to relieve her. Is not this the whole matter; though your scrupulous generosity did not allow you to speak thus plainly?

It is generally thought arrogant to return pity for love. I cannot conceive why? It is brutal not to feel for the distressed; doubly so, when we ourselves are—though ever so innocently—the cause of their uneasiness: therefore I think it impossible, in such cases, to divest one's self of compassion; and both unnecessary and inexpedient to conceal it. I would not have a gentleman, or even a lady, say—*I pity you*;—but I think they may—nay, ought—to express pity by their looks, softened voice, perhaps tears, and indirectly by their words: a man, certainly, with rather more circumspection than need be

be observed by a woman. Compassion, when delicately shewn, is far from being offensive; it is grateful.

I hope what I have said on this subject, will be sufficient to induce you to treat me, in this affair, with the same unreserve you do in all others: though, certainly, to any other than a long-tried, faithful friend,—in which light I dare to think you regard me—it would be dishonourable in you to communicate your sentiments for Miss Ormsby, because it would be exposing her to censure; custom having—I believe, very rightly—made it improper for the fair sex to love first. They should—

“ —Be woo'd; and not unsought be won.”

Whether you think fit to trust me or not with the situation of your heart, I conjure you be careful not to hide it from yourself. Be assured it is not sufficient for you merely to give this young lady a preference to others: it is requisite you should love her. A preference in a disengaged heart, is not of much consequence; if circumstances favour,

vour, it may *probably* improve into passion; but it is not at all *certain* that it will do so. Think, then,—think, my dear Marchmont, what a state of misery would be your's, if you should bind yourself to a woman who is little more than indifferent to you; and afterwards meet one able to teach you the—then dreadful—lesson of love!

As you value your happiness, make no professions, till your heart itself dictates them.

With the most fervent friendship,

Yours,

METHUEN.

To

TO LORD METHUEN.—LONDON.

MARCHMONT-HOUSE.

NEVER, sure, was so elaborate an epistle written to so little purpose. “Pity that one who *writes* so well, should ever *write* in vain!”

Into what a passion has Miss Ormsby’s humble birth thrown my usually temperate friend! I am surprized you were generous enough not to bring her father from “the waters under the earth.” However, I allow it is a desirable thing to make genteel connections; and if I could call back past time, and reverse the decrees of fate, Miss Ormsby’s descent should be noble; but as this is not entirely in my power, I am content to let matters stand as they are. What a wide field would this subject open to the range of a moralist! Pity I have no talents that way! I could have told you that high birth is merely incidental; that the real source of honour is within the mind, &c. &c.

After



After making so light of what, I assure you, I look upon as your most important objection, you will not expect me to pay much attention to the other. The whole force of your arguments turns on this single point,—I don't love Hannah Ormsby: the consequence of which is, I may hereafter love somebody else. I certainly have not that sort of sentiment for her, to which, alone, your romantic imagination would affix the name of love: but I esteem, and—you have reconciled me to the acknowledgment—I pity her. The sweet girl is unhappy; it is in my power to make her otherwise;—and shall I not? Methuen, I should despise myself, were I capable of hesitating between the *prudent* and the *generous*. Yes, I will sacrifice my long-preserved liberty to her peace. Neither do I apprehend any danger from this conduct. I am confident I never shall be in love, according to your eccentric notions of that passion. I doubt not, Hannah will always be able to maintain the preference I already give her. Indeed, were I to meet a woman equally amiable

amiable, who joined a very superior understanding to a form more attractively lovely, —I know not that I could answer for my heart. But I have not the least expectation of ever seeing such a person. Nine-tenths of the young and handsome part of the sex —and, positively, my wife must be young and handsome—are intolerably affected, impertinent, and insignificant. By the way, it is of little consequence whether it be nature or education that makes them so: it is sufficient for me to know that the thing is certain; and certain it is, even by your own confession.

To be very serious:—It is too late for you to argue against my choice:—it is made. 'Tis true, I have not yet declared myself; but I have said more than I would un-say for worlds. Could I recede from what I had even *looked*, I should hold myself unworthy to be Lord Methuen's friend.

I have not written to my sister Wentworth on this subject, because I expect to see her in a few days. I shall be miserable if

if the dear creature does not approve *mes petites demarches*.

I am interrupted by company. Farewell.

EDWARD MARCHMONT.

To

TO MISS O'BRYEN.—LONDON.

CHETWYND VILLA.

AS your last gives me an account of your arrival at lord Linfield's, I set about answering all your dear letters. To begin with the one that desires us to direct your conduct to the marquis: you cannot imagine how much it embarrassed and distressed us. There is no denying it,—it would have half broken our hearts, had you settled in France; but we did not dare to give you the least hint of such a nature; well knowing you would, in that case, refuse St. Clair, were he ever so dear to you. Could we have been certain you had no *tendresse* for him, we should not have had any scruple about the matter: his rank and fortune would not have biassed us, for we were far from fearing with lady Enmore, that “you might never have such another offer.” Our sole difficulty arose from the apprehension of your loving him. Your uncle, indeed, was inclined to think the marquis indebted



debted for your confessed predilection, only to his superiority over your other admirers, and to his softness, which excited your's. He thought your letter to him supported this opinion. "Do you imagine," he would say to me, "that a girl in love could write on such subjects as these, with so much judgment and accuracy?" He acknowledged, however, that he apprehended the little Frenchman in a fair way of gaining your affections. But, for my part, when I considered that he obviously possessed a larger portion of my dear, faucy girl's favour, than any other gentleman has been fortunate enough to obtain, I could not help fearing he had already conquered a heart, which has braved so many attacks. In this persuasion I wrote to you. I begged you to examine your heart, and chuse whatever was most consonant to its wishes, without a thought of us, who could not but approve of every thing you did, and must be happy in your happiness. This letter, I suppose, you have not received, as you do not mention it.

You will perhaps be surprized, that I once wrote to you about this gentleman in rather a favourable manner. The proposal was represented to me to be so advantageous, that I was afraid I should be wanting to your interest, if I did not seem to approve it. I at first flattered myself I should be able to master my selfishness; but the more I reflected on the subject, the more insupportable became the thought of losing your society.

The pleasure we received from your two next letters, amply compensated the anxiety conveyed to us by the preceding. Valeria has acted like *herself*! This sentence only, which comprehends every thing noble, can sufficiently express our sentiments of your conduct to Miss Marchmont.

We are charmed with the hope of soon seeing you. Lord Melmont says, he expects his daughter and Mr. Domville will pay him a visit early in the summer. I fancy it would be agreeable to you to wait for them. Your friend, lady Lucy, will be delighted with your company: but if you would rather come to Ireland immediately,  
let

let us know, and Mr. Chetwynd will go for you.

Why did my lovely Valeria say, in one of her letters, "*If I am handsome.*" Do you really think I can suppose you ignorant of your beauty? If you have either eyes or ears you must know it; for you have never been debarred the use of looking-glasses, nor the conversation of the other sex. No man—not even your uncle—ever addressed you, but in a stile that would have been ridiculous flattery to any other; you have subdued more hearts than you have numbered years: how, then, is it possible for you to doubt your being handsome? I know you are not vain; and, when you write to me, I insist on your taking no pains to avoid the imputation of vanity. I wish to be made acquainted with every thing that concerns you, even to the conversations you are engaged in; and if you gratify my desire, self-praise is unavoidable. I aspire to be treated with the same freedom you would use to a correspondent of your own age; nay, more, for friendship might not be able to exclude misconstruing envy from a younger

younger breast; whereas I am prouder, even of your exterior charms, than it would at all become you to be, and fancy to *myself* a kind of merit in *your* merits.

My brother is violently afflicted with the gout in his head and stomach. His physicians have scarcely any hopes of him. Poor lady O'Bryen is in great distress on his account. I own to you, I think she has not much reason; so sordid, and ill-tempered a husband, will be no great loss. Francis O'Bryen has been apprized of his father's dangerous state. He is now at Rome; but we expect this intelligence will bring him home.

As Mr. Chetwynd is writing to you, I shall lengthen this epistle only by the assurance of my being,

Your ardently affectionate friend,

CAROLINE CHETWYND.



TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

HERMITAGE.

I WRITE this from the sweetest romantic spot in England. But I must go back a little, to tell you how I came here. The morning after I arrived in London, lord and lady Methuen—a most amiable pair—paid a visit at lord Linfield's, purposely to see Mrs. Marchmont, and conduct her to her sister. They seemed much disappointed at not finding her; more, though, on Mrs. Wentworth's account than their own, not being at all acquainted with her. I told them, Monsieur and Madame de Villemar's extreme reluctance to part with their niece, had induced her to lay aside her intention of coming to England. I added, that I had a letter from her to Mrs. Wentworth, which I wished for an opportunity of delivering into that lady's own hands; as I was extremely desirous of her acquaintance.

"You must visit her then, madam," said lady Methuen, "for she never leaves home."

"The

“ The retired, and melancholy Mrs. Wentworth,” observed lord Methuen, “ would be no desirable companion to a lady in the full bloom of youth and beauty; and who possesses a great deal of vivacity—if I rightly read her animated face.”

“ When I have the honour to be better known to lord Methuen, I dare to think he will judge more favourably of me. I have not been wholly nursed in the lap of prosperity; and I hope my heart is not naturally so hard, but it could have felt for others, although it had never found occasion of feeling for itself.”

“ I did not, in the least, mean to question the goodness of your heart, madam,” said his lordship.

“ If you had,” returned his lady, “ I should have entertained a very poor opinion of your skill in physiognomy. Now I pretend to be a perfect *connoisseuse* in that science; and I am positive Miss O’Brien’s fine features express as much good-nature as vivacity. I am sure, my dear,” added she, addressing me with an

agreeable familiarity, "you will not have  
" any objection to going with me to Mrs.  
" Wentworth's to-morrow morning. Lord  
" Methuen cannot accompany us, as he is  
" engaged in town. My coach will hold  
" us, and our women."

I readily assented to this proposal; telling lady Linfield, that I hoped she would not be offended with me, as she saw that, by a non-compliance, I should eternally forfeit my reputation for good-nature. She made some polite objections; but lady Methuen's earnestness prevailed.

We accordingly set out at eleven next day; and after a pleasant little journey, of about sixteen miles, arrived at Hermitage before two.

Mrs. Wentworth, knowing the equipage from the window, ran out; and, getting to the coach side just as we were alighting, she exclaimed, "My sister is here!"

"Alas! my dear," said lady Methuen, taking her hand, "she is not here; but this  
" young lady can give you some account of  
" her."

I felt

I felt exceedingly for her disappointment; tears of pity filled my eyes;—they alarmed her.

“ Ah!” cried she, “ my poor Leonora is ill.”

“ No; I assure you, madam, she is extremely well; at least she was so when I left Paris.”

When we got into the parlour, the lovely widow strenuously embraced her friend; saluted me; and, placing herself by me, earnestly enquired for Miss Marchmont. I presented her letter, saying, I should think her very ceremonious if she scrupled reading it before us.

“ Perhaps, my dear Harriet, you would rather retire to read it; I am sure Miss O'Bryen will excuse you.”

“ Miss O'Bryen!” echoing my name with much quickness and surprize.

“ I beg her pardon, and yours,” said her ladyship, “ for neglecting to introduce her to you; but, really, my concern for you put it out of my head.”

“ You are on your way to Ireland, I suppose, madam,” said Mrs. Wentworth.



I replied, "Not immediately." I thought the question extremely abrupt.

Pleading impatience to peruse her letter, she left the room: and lady Methuen, in a very polite manner, apologized to me for—what she called—the whimsicalness of her behaviour.

In some little time she returned;—her every feature enlivened by joy, and softened by sensibility. She flew towards me, and, clasping me in her arms, poured forth a thousand praises and acknowledgments of—what she termed—my generosity to her sister. She spoke incoherently, and in a stile extravagantly beyond my deserts.

Lady Methuen looked on in silence for some minutes, then begged Mrs. Wentworth to tell her the cause of those transports. "But just now," said she, "your behaviour to Miss O'Bryen was so cold, as to border on incivility; at present, it is as unaccountably warm."

"At first, Louisa, I regarded this charming lady as the destroyer of a sister's happiness. Read that letter, and see how unjust I have been to her. Perhaps I ought not

"to

“ to divulge Leonora’s secrets; but I can  
“ hide nothing from you.”

I am summoned to breakfast.

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I return to finish my letter while the coach is getting ready. We are going to take an airing, and shall probably meet Sir Edward Marchmont, Mrs. Wentworth’s only brother, whom she expects here this morning. I am sorry he is coming to break in on our sweet female party. I cannot say I dislike either men or mirth; yet I never spent two days more to my taste than these last past, when both were entirely excluded. Lady Methuen’s fine understanding makes her a most agreeable companion. Mrs. Wentworth has a great deal of good sense; and there is a peculiar softness and delicacy in every thing she says, that is ineffably pleasing: she has the most insinuating gentleness of manners; there dwells a “melancholy grace” about her, which touches the heart in a way not easy to describe. Whenever I

look on this beautiful, unhappy woman, I call to mind those lines.

- “ As when a dusky mist involves the sky,  
“ The moon through all the dreary vapours spreads  
“ The radiant vesture of her silver light  
“ O’er the dull face of nature ; so her charms  
“ Divinely graceful shone upon her grief,  
“ Bright’ning the cloud of woe.”

I am afraid she is melancholy to excess, when alone ; for her Louisa’s and my joint endeavours, can hardly keep her in tolerable spirits for any length of time. Amiable unfortunate ! how deeply do I feel your woes ! Her history, which you may remember I promised you, will be conveyed to you by this post : I have interspersed it with some account of her family. When you reflect on my intimacy with Miss Marchmont—who is of a communicative disposition, and shewed me several of her sister’s letters—you will not be surprized that my information is so particular.

Lady Methuen says Sir Edward Marchmont is a charming fellow, and bids me take care of my heart. I felt more for St.

Clair

Clair than I ever did—or, it may be, ever shall—experience for any other of his sex. Yet how readily I resigned him! not, indeed, without regret; but that regret abundantly compensated, by the pleasure of serving my friend, and the delightful consciousness of having acted rightly.

Always your

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

Mrs. Wentworth's father, Sir George Marchmont, was on a tour through France, when he became enamoured of Mademoiselle de Villemar, a little, lively brunette, who had just escaped out of a convent, where she had been brought up, having lost her mother in her infancy. Her father, whose mind was bent on aggrandizing his family, had designed to make her take the veil,



that he might leave the larger fortune to his son.

The gloom of a cloister ill suited the gay temper of Angelica : but in vain she remonstrated, she wept in vain ; *Monsieur son pere* was inexorable. Her good genius did not abandon her in this extremity ; but having made interest with the king of terrors, prevailed on his dread majesty to dismiss the old gentleman from all his employments on this side eternity.

Her brother was too generous to use the advantage a father's unjust pride had given him. He took her home, and promised to give her a handsome fortune.

Her situation became now as agreeable, as it had before been the contrary. Monsieur de Villemar was married to a lady who had passed two years in the same convent with her, and the tenderest friendship had always subsisted between them.

She was soon distinguished by the count de Meulan, whose addresses were highly approved of by her brother, and not objected to by her. This nobleman bore a respectable character ; and though past the bloom

bloom of life, might still be thought handsome. Angelica, however, had no liking to his person, but her little heart fluttered at the thought of being a countess.

While this match was on the *tapis*, she happened to meet Sir George Marchmont in the Thuilleries: he walked with some gentlemen and ladies she knew; by which means they became acquainted. It is not surprizing that two very engaging young persons should draw each other's attention: *pour abrégé*,—a few visits created a lively passion on both sides.

He declared himself to her brother, who answered, Mademoiselle was engaged. Sir George, in despair, threw himself at his mistress's feet. *Le beau chevalier Anglois* was not to be *resisted*. She candidly explained her situation; assured him of her indifference to Meulan; and, with a modest frankness, confessed her attachment to him. As she knew her brother's high sense of honour would never permit him to countenance her jilting the count, she consented to marry Sir George privately, and afterwards fled with him to England.

When Monsieur de Villemar found his sister was married, he rightly judged a pursuit would be improper. Though he did not endeavour to detain her, he was extremely shocked at her marrying a heretic. When she forsook the Roman catholic communion, his indignation was so great, he resolved never to see her more.

The affection of an amiable husband she found sufficient to console her for the loss of every thing she had sacrificed to him. They lived in an uninterrupted course of happiness for twelve years, when lady Marchmont died, leaving only three children out of seven;—Edward, who was then eleven years old; Harriet, nine; and Leonora, eight.

Monsieur de Villemar was more grieved at this event, than might have been expected, from his antecedent behaviour; and having no children of his own, readily gave ear to his wife's proposal of adopting one of his late sister's. He wrote to Sir George, earnestly begging him to repair the injury he had done him, in depriving him of his sister, by giving him up one of her  
her

her daughters, whom he would look on as his own child, and leave her every thing he died possessed of; stipulating only, that she should be entirely resigned to his care; and that he must be allowed to bring her up in the Roman catholic religion.

Sir George's notions of religion were extremely liberal; he was likewise a good deal in debt; so he chearfully accepted the offer, and dispatched the little Leonora to Paris; the dowager lady Marchmont having promised to provide for Harriet, who lived mostly with her.

While Sir George wholly devoted himself to the education of his son, his mother applied herself with no less diligence to that of his daughter. She looked on music, dancing, &c. as the mere superficies of education. She made her young pupil read: she taught her to think! She shewed her to appreciate the blessings of life justly; and patiently to bear its misfortunes. Her chief care was to implant religion deeply in her mind; and not only religion, but honour: for, however insufficient a guide the latter may be without the former, it certainly is  
an



an excellent auxiliary; it gives a superior nobleness to our thoughts, and a brighter polish to our actions.

At eighteen, the lovely, all-accomplished Harriet Marchmont, became the wife of Mr. Wentworth. This gentleman came recommended by every advantage that birth, education, and fortune could add to the bounty of nature. Her friends approved, and she adored him. But, alas! he had one ill quality, of which she, unhappily, was ignorant,—a most jealous temper, strengthened by an unfavourable opinion of female virtue.

They lived in the most perfect harmony almost a year: nor did she in all that time discover his disposition. Perhaps she would never have done so, had not her brother, who was just then returned from Italy, brought home with him Mr. Methuen, eldest son to lord Methuen, whose overbearing, proud, and unsocial temper, drove his children from his society. Mr. Methuen was continually with Mr. Marchmont; either at Marchmont-house, or Wentworth-place. Mr. Wentworth looked on his wife

as the cause. He narrowly watched her actions; but, in the true spirit of jealousy, was careful not to let her perceive he suspected her, for fear of putting her on her guard.

The innocent Harriet saw not the precipice on which she stood; she took no pains to conceal her esteem for her brother's friend: when present, she treated him with distinguished civility; and in his absence frequently gave him the praises his merit entitled him to.

Unfortunately, likewise, his behaviour to her, was but too well calculated to confirm her husband's suspicions: to all women he was attentive and polite; but to Mrs. Wentworth, he was even assiduous; he admired her,—he loved her next to his Louisa.

Miss Louisa Sydney was the daughter of a clergyman, who had left her a very small fortune. It was madness to suppose the haughty lord Methuen would ever allow his son to make such an alliance. Mr. Methuen made both the young lady and her mother sensible, that it would be fruitless to propose it to him; and without much difficulty

difficulty obtained their consent to a private union, to be kept secret during the old lord's life. His frequent visits began to be observed: the world set him down as Miss Sydney's lover; and, for once, the world said less than the truth, since he was already her husband. The report reached his father, who roundly told him, he must either give up Miss Sydney's acquaintance, or his favour; and concluded with reminding him, that he had intended some time before to make another excursion to Italy, which he hoped he had not forgotten. This disagreeable intelligence he quickly communicated to his Louisa and her mother, who concurred in advising him to make the voyage his father proposed. He staid but a short time abroad, being unable to support the absence of his beloved wife; though, after his return, he dared to make her but short visits, and those seldom, and private.

Under such circumstances, he found great consolation in complaining to the gentle, affectionating Harriet, whom he made unreservedly his confidante. He sought opportunities of conversing with her alone,

that he might talk of his Louisa. Conscientious of the honourable nature of his friendship for her, he thought not of concealing it from her husband, or any other. No wonder, then, if the magnifying eye of jealousy saw enough to condemn them.

She began, at length, to perceive a considerable abatement in Mr. Wentworth's affection. In vain she sought the cause for it in her own blameless conduct: she was obliged to solve it into inconstancy. She would not upbraid him: she endeavoured to hide her suspicions; but she could not hide the grief they occasioned her; he perceived it, and Methuen being in London, placed it to the account of his absence. He asked her, with a kind of sneer, why she was low-spirited? Unused to speak any thing but pure truth, she hesitated, and appeared confused, while she attributed it to a head-ach.

“ O, you want company, child; you  
“ will be better next week: Mr. Methuen's  
“ conversation——”. He stopped suddenly, as recollecting himself; but the quickness wherewith he had spoken,—the tone  
and



and look of angry irony,—the emphatical pronunciation of the name of Methuen,—at once opened her eyes. She was all amazement; and, unable to speak a word in her own justification, sat silent; confusedly revolving in her mind every circumstance of her conduct to Methuen, and his to her, which could possibly give rise to her husband's displeasure. Her silence, and very apparent disorder, had but too much the air of guilt; and, doubtless, was so construed by the self-tormenting Wentworth.

At this very instant a servant came in, and delivered a letter to his lady. The superscription was a man's hand, and like her brother's; who being the only gentleman she corresponded with, she imagined the letter was from him, and very naturally said aloud, as she opened it, "From Edward." Her cheek burned when she found it was from Methuen.

The occasion of this fatal letter was as slight, as its consequences were important. Miss Marchmont had written to her sister to send her some English books. Mr. Methuen

Methuen having a friend going to Paris, promised to get him to take them to her; and Mrs. Wentworth commissioned him, when he went to London, to buy them: he had lost the list she gave him, and wrote to her for another.

Though this was his sole motive for writing, he had not entirely confined himself to this subject: he could not help mentioning his Louisa, who was always uppermost in his thoughts.

Had she been at liberty to shew this letter, it would have effectually destroyed every suspicion against her; but she had too much honour, to betray so important a secret: and determining with herself to ask Mr. Methuen's permission—which she did not doubt of obtaining—to entrust Mr. Wentworth with the knowledge of his marriage; she thought it best not to touch on the subject till the next week, which was fixed on for their removal to London for the winter. She did not, therefore, contradict the unintentional falsehood she at first uttered, of the letter being from her brother.

If

If we do not judge by the event, her conduct was not very imprudent; and, surely, it was no great crime, by silence to confirm her husband in a mistake she had not intended to lead him into, and which she meant should continue but three or four days: yet the fatality that seemed to wait on all her actions, so ordered it, that this little deceit was, in a great measure, the cause of her ruin; for having unthinkingly thrown the cover of the letter on a table that stood by her, he found it, and easily discovered Methuen's hand in the direction, and his arms in the seal.

The little interval between that time and their going to London, he was almost continually abroad; and she suffered all the uneasiness her situation may be supposed to occasion; impatiently longing for the time which she expected would put an end to his jealousy, and her own consequent trouble:—too soon came the time appointed for this unfortunate journey!

The morning after they arrived in town, Mr. Methuen came to wait on them. Mr. Wentworth was not at home; and his lady seized

seized on that opportunity to make her intended request, which being immediately granted, she, in return, went to pay a visit to Mrs. Sydney and her daughter, to whom she had long before promised her acquaintance.

On her return home, she found the following note from her grandmother :

TO MRS. WENTWORTH.—LONDON.

“ HERMITAGE, *4th November.*

“ DEAR HARRIET,

“ I request you will come here instantly,  
“ on the receipt of this. Your father—ah!  
“ my child, how shall I soften the dreadful  
“ tidings!—your dear father is not expected  
“ live. He was so far on his way to Lon-  
“ don, when overtaken by a violent illness.  
“ Edward, who is with him, is half dis-  
“ tracted. I scarcely know what I write;  
“ perhaps I magnify the danger: do not be  
“ too much alarmed. Come to us imme-  
“ diately.

“ SOPHIA MARCHMONT.”

In



In all imaginable distress, she threw herself again into her coach; after giving lady Marchmont's billet to a servant, with orders to deliver it to his master as soon as he came in.

The day after her arrival at Hermitage, Sir George breathed his last. A messenger was dispatched with this melancholy news to his son-in-law. The fellow returned with an account that he was not to be found; that he had left his house very early that morning, and nobody had seen him since.

The unhappy Harriet, already sinking under the loss of her father, fainted away on receiving this intelligence. It rather surprized than affrighted lady Marchmont and Sir Edward; yet they instantly sent another servant to London, who brought back word, that Mr. Wentworth had killed Mr. Methuen in a duel, and fled, no one knew where. He brought the following letter to Sir Edward, which had been found on his unfortunate brother's table.

To

TO EDWARD MARCHMONT, Esq.

*Nov. 5th, five o'clock in the morning.*

“ I should not think myself justified in  
“ leaving England for ever, without ex-  
“ plaining my reasons for taking such a  
“ step, to a family I am so nearly connect-  
“ ed with, and for which I have so perfect  
“ a respect. As Sir George is so danger-  
“ ously ill, I think proper to address myself  
“ to you.

“ In what words shall I inform you of a  
“ sister's infamy! But, heavens! what is  
“ *your* dishonour to *mine*!—O, Edward,  
“ who could have supposed that Harriet—  
“ whose mind seemed as angelic as her  
“ form—was capable of betraying a hus-  
“ band who adored her?—Accursed Me-  
“ thuen!—But his heart's blood shall wash  
“ out the stain he has cast on my honour!  
“ By the Eternal Justice it shall!—My ven-  
“ geance has slept too long!—I could not  
“ believe her *personally* guilty; I thought  
“ her *heart* alone had strayed. I endea-  
“ voured

“ vowed to pay indifference with indifference : I even flattered myself I had succeeded.—Delusive hope !—At this very moment, when my blood boils with resentment, it rends my soul to think—I part with her for ever.

“ I intended to write to you calmly, and tell you every circumstance on which I found my opinion of her guilt ; but my hand refuses to trace the odious particulars. Let it suffice to say, they could not hide their mutual fondness even before my face ; that they correspond by letters ; and—can I write it !—make *assignments* ! This last insupportable injury, I neither knew nor suspected, till yesterday morning. I went to see my friend Henderson ; his servant said he had gone out about an hour before, and was expected back every moment. I stepped up to the dining room to wait his return ; where I had not been many minutes, when my coach stopped at the opposite door, and Harriet alighted from it. I saw her enter the dining room, and sit down. An old lady—who, doubtless was the confidante

“ dante of this infamous amour—came in :  
“ they saluted each other, and talked stand-  
“ ing for some time. The hell-hag then  
“ advanced towards a window that was  
“ open, and endeavoured to shut it down :  
“ at the same instant a hackney-chair, the  
“ curtains close drawn on the inside, was  
“ carried into the hall, the door of which  
“ was immediately shut :—insufficient pre-  
“ cautions ! The old woman had not been  
“ able to pull down the fast :—I plainly  
“ perceived the hated Methuen ! — He  
“ bowed to both ladies ; took hold of  
“ Harriet’s hand—that faithless pledge of  
“ the love she vowed to me—and seating  
“ her on a sofa, shut down the window.  
“ I saw no more : but I had already seen  
“ too much to need any further proof of  
“ my wretchedness.

“ The hour approaches in which I shall  
“ rid the world of a villain, or from his  
“ hand receive insensibility of my wrongs.  
“ Adieu, then, Marchmont,—adieu, for  
“ ever. I require it of Sir George and  
“ you, as a last testimony of friendship, that  
“ if I am the survivor, you make no en-



“ quires after me. Never can I return to  
“ this kingdom. I will not be pointed at  
“ for ———. My heart bursts with rage.

“ Who that valued honour would trust it  
“ to a *woman's* keeping? By what fatal  
“ phrenzy was I induced to renounce my  
“ just—my well-grounded opinion of the  
“ sex, in favour of such — I will use no  
“ epithet of reproach; she is your sister;  
“ and she is—destruction!—she is the wife  
“ of Wentworth!

“ Tell her—no, tell her nothing. I  
“ will forget her for ever. Let her do the  
“ same by me.

“ If vice can make her happy—may she  
“ be so! If she will return to virtue—  
“ may the Almighty accept her penitence!  
“ but *I* never can.

“ I insist on it, however, she must not  
“ be treated with unkindness, either by her  
“ father or you. I took her out of your  
“ family; her misconduct affects only my-  
“ self; therefore, by me only let it be re-  
“ membered.

“ My will was made when she was in-  
“ nocent, or I was deceived: were it to be  
“ done

“ done again, I should not alter a tittle or  
“ it; it makes her mistress of my whole  
“ fortune: let it take place as if I were  
“ dead. I would to Heaven I were, to be  
“ past the sense of dishonour!—Dishonour!  
“ —the word fires me——I fly to ven-  
“ geance!

“ HENRY WENTWORTH.”

As this letter was delivered before Mrs. Wentworth, there was no concealing it from her. It is past the power of words to tell the agonies it gave her: they were too strong for her tender mind; and long and successive fainting fits, seemed to promise her gentle spirit a release from its earthly prison.

As I fear I have already been too prolix in this melancholy recital, and have now brought it to that pitch of distress, that description is no longer able to assist the imagination, I shall make the conclusion as concise as possible.

Several months were spent in ineffectual search after Mr. Wentworth. Sir Edward, supposing he might have gone to Spain, where he had formerly passed two years, wrote to Cadiz, to Don Juan d'Almagro, whom he had often heard his brother mention with friendship. Here follows the translation of Don Juan's answer :

TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—  
ENGLAND.

“ CADIZ.

“ I was honoured, Signior, with your  
“ letter some time ago, and should have  
“ answered it immediately, if your brother  
“ —who was then my guest—had not been  
“ in a dangerous fever, occasioned by a fall  
“ from his horse; by which, likewise, he  
“ received a severe contusion on his head.  
“ I would not inform you he was here, lest  
“ your pleasure at finding him, should, if  
“ he died, add the sting of disappointment  
“ to the sorrow of losing him for ever.  
“ Unhappily the event justifies my precau-  
“ tion—It is with sincere grief I tell you  
“ —he is dead.

“ He

“ He left me no orders of any nature  
“ whatsoever ; and, indeed, he was not ca-  
“ pable of doing so, not being entirely in his  
“ senses during the whole time of his ill-  
“ ness, which lasted more than three weeks.

“ I find no papers after him, and no  
“ more money than will suffice to defray  
“ the necessary expences.

“ As the distance between Spain and  
“ England makes it inconvenient to wait  
“ your directions about his burial, I have  
“ taken the conduct of it on myself; and  
“ you may expect his body to arrive in  
“ England some little time after you receive  
“ this.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.”

The innocent victim of misplaced jealousy was in so weak a state both of body and mind, that lady Marchmont thought it advisable to keep from her the knowledge of her husband's death ; but her brother was of a different opinion, and with a proper degree of caution, communicated it to her.



He was undoubtedly in the right: great as must have been the first shock of this dreadful uncertainty, it was hardly more difficult to support, than the cruel suspense from which it delivered her. Her passions, which had been so long wound up to the highest pitch, now all at once lost their tension: she sunk into a sort of stupid despair.

Lady Marchmont's days were shortened by the too tender sympathy with which she beheld the miseries of her favourite child. Her death roused Mrs. Wentworth from her lethargy, and sharpened that sensibility, whose fine, self-pointed edge, had been worn off by too rough an use.

Religious considerations assisting her good understanding, after some time, her tenderly attentive brother had the satisfaction to see her assume a degree of tranquillity.

All her letters to her sister speak the resignation of a pious mind! yet they sometimes contain such lively touches of sorrow, as would wring compassion from the hardest heart.

Wentworth-place, together with all her husband's large fortune, is her's; but she resides  
entirely

entirely at Hermitage, which her grandmother's will bequeathed to her; being unable to bear the sight of a place, where every object would so strongly call to remembrance, happiness—for ever lost!

Though he is now near three years dead, a sable robe—which, on others, but too frequently veils a joyful heart—still continues to make this faithful mourner's person correspond with her mind.

She has caused the most sumptuous monumental honours to grace her Henry's tomb;—those honours, which greatness with mimic woe, so often gives to vice!—The hand of virtuous sorrow raised them over the remains of the noble, ill-fated Wentworth.

I have been unpardonably negligent, in leaving you all this time to suppose Mr. Methuen was killed: he was only dangerously wounded. His father died of an apoplexy during his indisposition; which left him at liberty to declare the marriage, that had proved so fatal to Mrs. Wentworth. She had, nevertheless, so much greatness of mind, as to continue her friendship to them both.

TO LORD METHUEN.—LONDON.

HERMITAGE.

I WAS met within four miles of Hermitage this morning, by your lady and my two lovely sisters. Is not Leonora a most charming creature! I cannot express how much I admire her. What an elegant height and shape! Just that air which the *Spectator* so finely calls, “recitative dancing.”—A symmetry of features, how beautiful and exact—*un teint de lis et de rose!*—Such eyes! bright, eloquent, and—as some French writer prettily says—just ready to be tender: ah! *mon Dieu!* what eyes they are! nor France, nor England, can boast such another pair. ’Tis well for Miss Ormsby, and ’tis well for myself, that this little divinity is my sister.

Now I mention Miss Ormsby,—you must know my affair goes on rapidly: a declaration made—graciously received—and I am actually on my way to London, to propose the

the matter to her father. But enough of this for the present.

Do you recollect a dispute I once held with you and lady Methuen; you both *against*, and I *for* natural affection? Now, my lord, if there be no such thing as natural affection between brothers and sisters, on what principle will you account for the warmth wherewith I love a sister, I am but a few hours acquainted with? My present feelings would enable me to point out the fallacy of all your arguments. Surely, I have no obligations to Leonora; nor is my self-love satisfied with the recollection of any services done to her: the distance at which we have lived, has prevented the exchange of kindnesses. As a brother, I cannot be supposed to love her for her beauty. She seems to possess a cultivated understanding, and a worthy heart; but I am by no means a competent judge of either—particularly the latter—in so short a time. How comes it then, my friend, but from the mere impulses of fraternal love, that I felt—as, I swear to you, I did—a livelier emotion when I pressed this enchanting



chanting creature to my bosom, than I experienced in receiving a parting embrace from the woman I mean to make my wife.

How I should triumph over you, if my sister's sentiments did not seem to favour your opinion. Perhaps lady Methuen has been poisoning her mind with her cold philosophy. The dear girl does not at all return my tenderness. Her behaviour to me is extremely polite, but not affectionate:—she just *suffers* my caresses; apparently from the consideration of my being her brother. I shall really be very unhappy if she will not love me. My dear father was a little capricious in not allowing me to visit my mother's relations. Harriet was twice in France with her grandmother; so she has the good fortune to possess Leonora's friendship.

It is late. I am fatigued, and sleepy. Adieu.

I had intended to go to London to-morrow, but have changed my mind, and shall remain here a week or ten days.

Yours,

EDWARD MARCHMONT.

To

TO MRS. CHETWYND,—IRELAND.

HERMITAGE.

I HAVE just received your letter, my dear madam, inclosed in one from lady Lucy Domville, who scolds me unconscionably for staying here so long. I mean to appease her by returning to town to-morrow; as I should be sorry to make the Linfield family think I slighted them.

Lady Methuen went home eight days ago; but Mrs. Wentworth's being a good deal indisposed with a cold, induced me to remain with her. Indeed, it is not easy to leave her. I never in my life conceived such an enthusiastic regard for any person, in so short a time. I was delighted with Miss Marchmont;—but Mrs. Wentworth melts my whole soul to friendship, pity, and admiration!—What a dangerous mixture of both is Sir Edward!—The attractive gaiety of Miss Marchmont—the irresistible softness of Mrs. Wentworth!

I have promised the lovely Harriet another visit before I leave England. You cannot imagine how much she is obliged to me, for devoting that time to her which she thinks I could spend more agreeably at lord Linfield's. She seems extremely fond of my company, and kindly expresses abundance of regret at parting with me. This morning—sweetly extravagant—she exclaimed, “How can I live without you, Valeria?” Her brother's fine eyes, softly languishing, seemed to repeat, “And how can I live without you, Valeria?”

I told you, in my last, that to humour a whim of lady Methuen's, I was—a good deal against my inclination—passed on Sir Edward for his sister Leonora. Her ladyship had the cruelty to keep him a whole day in his mistake; in order, she said, to convince him he was misled by the vivacity of his imagination, in an opinion he maintained against her lord and her. She had taken the trouble to write down a conversation they had on this subject; which, as I know my uncle loves argumentative pieces, I inclose.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wentworth sends to me, to propose a walk. Some new project, I suppose, for improving the gardens, &c. not that they require it—the place is a perfect paradise already; but having more leisure, and more money, than she well knows how to employ, she is ever creating new beauties around her.

Tell my kind uncle, I cannot think of giving him the trouble of coming for me; and shall, therefore, wait for lady Lucy.

Adieu.

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

*Inclosed*



*Inclosed in the preceding letter.*

Lady Methuen (*throwing down a book*).  
It is surprizing how the whole tribe of novel  
writers have fallen into this error.

Sir E. Marchmont. What error does  
your ladyship reprehend?

Lady Methuen. That of supposing, that  
a parent and child will feel a reciprocal af-  
fection, while they are ignorant of the rela-  
tionship that subsists between them.

Sir Edward. And do you think such a  
matter impossible? I take the liberty to  
differ from you, madam. The ties of na-  
ture are wonderfully strong, and almost im-  
perceptibly fine. I do believe that parents  
and children, brothers and sisters, or such  
near relations, would, by a secret sympa-  
thy, an involuntary and irresistible impulse  
of the mind, find themselves attached to  
each other, without knowing why.

Lord Methuen. My dear Sir Edward,  
you talk more like a poet than a philosopher;  
that is to say, with more elegance than  
sound

sound reasoning. For my part, I am inclined to think, that after we pass the brute creation, we shall find natural affection to be extremely limited. The parsimony of nature has not thought fit to bestow the same perfect instinct upon us, as upon other animals; trusting our preservation to our higher powers of mind.

*Sir Edward.* What then, my friends, you will not allow that the human species possess any of that unerring sympathy, which directs the new-dropt lamb to the teat designed for its preservation, while a hundred other fleecy mothers bleat unheeded round.

*Lord Metbuen.* No, my flowery friend, I will not allow it. I must maintain, that natural affection does not exist at all with us, uncoupled with knowledge.

*Lady Metbuen.* If a child should be changed at nurse, the supposed parents will take the same care of it, and feel for it the same fondness, they would have done to their proper offspring; and the substitute will experience the same reverence and affection

fection for them, it would have entertained for its own father and mother.

*Sir Edward.* I believe your ladyship may be right so far; but this only proves what lord Methuen seemed to hint just now—that other causes combine to attach us to our offspring. Although these causes might—in the case you have mentioned—seem to supply the place of nature, yet I do not thereby perceive, why these very parents, if they afterwards became acquainted with their own child, might not love it tenderly without discerning the cause; though they might still prefer the imaginary child to the real one, from the necessary effects of custom and prejudice.

*Lady Methuen.* I fear, Sir Edward, your sympathy stands on a slippery foundation.

*Sir Edward.* Well, my lord, what causes do you suppose to co-operate with natural affection? for I presume you had some such meaning when you said, that our preservation was partly trusted to our higher powers of mind.

Lord

Lord *Metbuen*. First, then, I will mention—self-love: that strongest affection of the mind, which governs us with the most uniform and uninterrupted influence; which teaches us to set a peculiar value on an estate, a house, a horse, a dog, or any other possession, merely because it is our *own*. Children are our property in a more particularly manner than any thing else: they are part of ourselves; they owe their being to us, and entirely depend on us. I must not omit, that we always extend good will to a person we have served; and kind and tender parents may reasonably think they have laid great obligations on their children. The conferring of favours is a very powerful incentive to love; even more than the receiving of them. Strange as this observation is, its justness cannot be contested. If this part of our tempers is not to be accounted for from self-love, I believe it is wholly unaccountable.

Sir *Edward*. There is some truth, and some imagination, in your observations. But why will you refer the dear unaccountable generosities of our nature to self-love?

You



You confuse my ideas. I no longer know what you mean by the term. Surely there is nothing so disinterested as parental affection.

*Lady Metbuen.* It is, indeed, difficult to mark where self-love runs into the social. But, my lord, Sir Edward expects you to find some more amiable auxiliaries to natural affection.

*Lord Metbuen.* A sense of duty must powerfully influence any mind not utterly depraved. Compassion softly induces us to love an infant in its helpless state; and as it grows up, we admire its beauty, esteem its merit, and are grateful for its gratitude.

*Sir Edward.* There are instances of parents loving children without beauty, merit, or gratitude.

*Lady Metbuen.* If the parents are unworthy themselves, it is little more surprising that they should love their unworthy offspring, than that bad people should love themselves. Besides, you must allow a great deal for the force of habit: a parent loves a child many years before it can be guilty of vices for which youth may not form a sufficient excuse. And though you deny

deny the power of self-love, you must grant, that a sense of duty and of compassion, still remains to aid the powerful instinctive fondness of nature, which will operate in favour of the child, whether deserving or undeserving.

Lord *Metbuen*. Let us admire the wisdom of Providence, which has not left the care of the infant to depend on the goodness of the parent. The love of children to their parents, arises almost entirely from their own virtue, and the desert on the other side. The love of parents towards their children, is an instinct, not materially differing from the instinct of brutes; like all other instincts, impelling from feeling to action, without any deductions of reason. We see that the parent, who has not virtue to nourish the soul by education, guided by unerring instinct, protects and cherishes the helpless body.

Lady *Metbuen*. I must own myself inclined to think, that natural affection does not subsist at all, at least not with any considerable force, except from the parent to the child.

Sir

*Sir Edward.* From what source do you derive our affection to our parents? If they be 'good, you say, from gratitude and esteem. But suppose them bad.

*Lady Methuen.* Habit, and a sense of duty, may create all the affection they can be imagined to feel.

*Sir Edward.* If the parent has been always bad, a habit of loving them could scarcely ever have taken place: and as to duty—it rules the actions only, not the heart; it gives the external marks of affection, but cannot possibly inspire it. Now, from what, but the secret workings of nature, arises love to a parent, whose character we cannot esteem, and from whom we have received no obligations?

*Lord Methuen.* My dear Marchmont, you are supposing a mere chimera. There are very few such parents as you describe; and those few, you may depend on it, are not loved by their children.

*Sir Edward.* Well, my friends, I hope you will at least allow, that fraternal affection is something more than friendship.

*Lady Methuen.* Perhaps fraternal affection

tion is only friendship. I grant you, we generally feel a more lively tenderness for our brothers and sisters, than for any other friends; yet this may not be occasioned by the sympathy of nature, but because we have had more opportunities of knowing them, and exchanging obligations with them.

*Lord Methuen.* Our love to our brothers, sisters, and relations in general, may in a great measure be attributed to our having lived constantly amongst them; and being, for that reason, better acquainted with them than with other people.

*Lady Methuen.* I fancy we shall end our dispute, as disputes are generally ended—with all parties retaining their own opinions. I must still condemn the absurdity of the novel writer, who shall describe unknown relations distinguishing each other by an irresistible impulse: and Sir Edward will still maintain his beloved sympathy—natural affection to all degrees of relationship, &c.

*Sir Edward.* I acknowledge that my opinion has been opposed by strong arguments: yet still I must persuade myself,  
that



that were I by any accident to meet my sister Leonora, whom I have not seen since we were both children, my heart would instantly distinguish her.

Lady *Methuen*. If you did not know her, you would give her but the same portion of esteem, that you would accord to the same degree of merit in another. And if you conceived a friendship for her, immediately on finding her to be your sister, it would be wholly the effect of a strong imagination, biaffed by prejudice, operating on a good and tender heart.

TO LORD METHUEN.—POPLAR-HILL.

LONDON.

THIS day I attended the too charming Miss O'Bryen to lord Linfield's. I was not a little chagrined, on calling at your house, to find you had already forsaken the gaieties of the town, for the serener pleasures of Poplar-hill. Why did you go, Methuen? I never wanted a friend so much as at this period. Your advice—but why do I talk of your advice?—you would give me such as I have not fortitude to take. How little have I already profited by your wise counsel! You warned me not to engage myself to Miss Ormsby.—I did; and severely repent it.—You bade me fly Miss O'Bryen;—I did not; and am irretrievably undone!

What a number of little circumstances conspired against me!—I gave free admittance to love, under the disguise of fraternal affection; and, far from resisting the dangerous intruder, I fancied there was a merit in cherishing it. The deceit, indeed,  
lasted

lasted only a day. But what will not such attractions do, in a single day? The manner of my introduction to her, naturally prevented the stiffness and formality that is apt to attend a beginning acquaintance, and placed us on the most easy and agreeable footing imaginable. I gave myself up, without reflection, to the seducing charms of her conversation. I thought I listened to her with delight, only because she spoke the strongest sense, adorned by the softest eloquence; and gazed on her with rapture, only because she was exquisitely beautiful. Your friendly letter brought me the first intimation of my danger: I then saw there was a necessity for my quitting her; but deceived myself so far, as to think it would be more prudent to stay at Hermitage—where she was to remain but two days—than to go to London, where she was going. I did not think of the affair that should have called me there; nor how easy it is, in such a place, to avoid a person that does not seek you. Harriet's illness prolonged her stay. — I ought to have gone—it

was impossible!—so firmly had love, in silken fetters, bound my soul!

At first, my conscience reminded me of my engagements, and reproached me with giving to another what was Miss Ormsby's due; but I soon learned to stifle its admonitions: and the lovely Valeria's tender and affectionate care of my poor sister, though little more than a stranger to her; her unremitting endeavours to amuse her; afforded me so many opportunities of admiring the goodness of her heart, that I almost thought I was in the right to love her. Ah! how cautious ought we to be of familiarizing ourselves to what we disapprove! since we thereby confound the notions of right and wrong in our minds, and utterly lose that nice discernment, which at first marked out the boundaries of each, and that delicate sensibility which shrunk from the appearance of evil.

Cruel powers!—A letter from lady Conway—impertinent woman!

I have not patience to write another word.

EDWARD MARCHMONT.

VOL. I.

G

To



TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—  
LONDON.

## MEADOW-VALE.

A FORTNIGHT away! and not been with my father yet! O thou “frosty” “spirited” fellow! Were I Hannah, I should revoke the soft consent you are so slow to take advantage of.

We shall soon be in town, if we can spirit up this stupid Sir James to come with us, or prevail on him to let us go without him. O, if women were wise, they would never part with liberty, as long as they retained youth and beauty! To be cooped up in the country, when one has a mind to flaunt about in the metropolis!——insufferable!

We are immersed in stupidity: not a man to flirt with, or a woman worth railing at.—Sir James is now trotting about his grounds; Hannah sauntering through the garden; where I suppose she would say—if it had not been said a thousand times already—

“The

“ The hills, the groves, the streams remain ;

“ But Damon here I seek in vain !”

For my part, I do nothing at all ; and  
this dull scene is repeated day after day : so,  
for any thing I can see to the contrary, the  
vapours must soon put an end to the exist-  
ence of

EMILY CONWAY.

TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—

LONDON.

POPLAR-HILL.

IT is impossible to express my concern for you, my dear friend. Is there no way of freeing you from this fatal engagement? If it be in my power to serve you, I intreat you to command me without reserve. Suppose I was to pay a visit to Miss Ormsby, and pretend, from a concern for your happiness, to betray your secrets to her, by candidly informing her of your situation.—Has she, do you think, generosity enough to resign you? Or Louisa, I fancy, could manage this nice affair with more delicacy and address.

If you are determined to marry her, I conjure you, if you have the slightest regard for your future repose, forbear to visit her rival. The more such a woman as Miss O'Bryen is known, the more she must be loved.

I should

I should have gone to you, instead of writing, but my poor little boy is not well, and Louisa very uneasy about him. Let me know, however, if I can do any thing for you; and, depend upon it, my tenderness for them shall not render me indifferent to the interests of my friend.

Sincerely yours,

METHUEN.



TO LORD METHUEN.—POPLAR-HILL.

LONDON.

WHAT a project! Let me add—how unworthy of my friend!—Heavens! did you think me capable of acting such an ungenerous part?—I am resolved to marry her; in other words, I am resolved to be miserable: better to be any thing than a scoundrel. I forged the galling fetters for myself;—honour, inexorable honour, commands me to wear them, and I must obey her. Yes, I will bind myself to one woman, whilst I burn, languish—die for another. Let not these unguarded expressions lead you to think, I love Miss O'Bryen in a manner unworthy of her. O, my passion for her, is as pure as the dew-drops that rest on the bosom of the lily.

I have written to lady Conway, to apologize for my negligence. I ventured to defer my wretchedness a little, by postponing my application to Mr. Ormsby till she comes to town.

While

While I was at Hermitage, I had not the courage to think of Miss Ormsby; my sister, therefore, was totally ignorant of my affairs. As I did not think it would be using her well, to suffer her to remain so any longer, I wrote to her yesterday evening. I would not let her perceive I was melancholy; but, on the contrary, affected a gaiety, that was far—oh! very far—from my heart: nor did I once mention Miss O'Bryen's too dear name; not that I should hesitate to confide in her, but because I know her unbounded affection for me would make her miserable, if she knew the half of what I suffer; and I would not add a feather's weight to the load of woe she bears, to be for ever exempt from sorrow. By the return of my servant, this morning, I have her answer. What penetration women have! Let me give you an extract from her letter:

“ Though to see you united to some  
 “ worthy woman, has long been the favourite wish of my heart, yet, I own, I am  
 “ far from being pleased to find you so  
 “ much nearer matrimony, than I imagined

“ you were. Miss Ormsby may—nay,  
“ since she is your choice, she *must* be  
“ amiable; but I am positive she is not  
“ equal to my dear Valeria. Indeed, Ed-  
“ ward, you have deceived me strangely:  
“ never will I pretend to read the heart  
“ again, since Miss O’Byren is not the  
“ mistress of your’s. You have greatly  
“ disappointed me; I had absolutely set my  
“ heart on an union between you and this  
“ lovely girl. Till I knew her, I never  
“ wished you to attach yourself to a beau-  
“ ty; as I believe they have generally  
“ more foibles, than fall to the share of al-  
“ most any other denomination of females:  
“ but she seems to have no faults. How  
“ was it possible for you, when you saw  
“ and heard her, to retain a thought of Miss  
“ Ormsby? I am certain you did forget her  
“ for the time; and I heartily wish you had  
“ forgotten her for ever. Such a superior  
“ creature as Valeria would have justified  
“ inconstancy. Though she has no fortune,  
“ I had rather see you married to a de-  
“ scendant of the families of Sedley and  
“ O’Byren,

“ O’Bryen, than to a merchant’s daughter  
“ with millions !”

And has not my Valeria a fortune? O, ye un pitying powers! why am I not at liberty to lay mine at her feet? What value has money, compared to her worth? I cannot describe to you the variety of tormenting sensations, every passage of Harriet’s letter excites: between it, and my own reflections, I am really little less than distracted. I am almost reduced to envy those holiday coxcombs that I meet dancing up and down the streets, whose superficial minds admit not of anxious thoughtfulness. Insensibility, it is true, shuts out refined and delicately pleasurable sensations; but secures them, likewise, from their attendant pains. Insipid state, however! and to be wished for only by wretches, who, like me, are doomed to misery that can end but with life.

To be in London, and not to go to lord Linfield’s, is impossible. I shall take a ride to Poplar-hill to-morrow, and stay with you till lady Conway, &c. come to town. I hope to find your sweet Arthur recovered.

G 5

O, Methuen!



O, Methuen! how blest is your situation,  
 possessed of such a son, and such a wife —  
 A wife, who was the woman of your  
 choice!—My God! I shall set myself mad  
 at last!

Farewell, my dear Augustus. Do not  
 think I envy you; be assured, envy never  
 yet had a place in the-breast of

EDWARD MARCHMONT.

To

TO MISS O'BRYEN.—ENGLAND.

PARIS.

O, VALERIA! why did I suffer you to go? Why accept your too generous resignation of the most amiable of men?—Unavailing resignation! You did not—could not—re-sign his heart. He is miserable:—how I reproach myself for being the cause! He makes me the confidante of his sorrows; says he has no consolation but in my friendship. Injured St. Clair!—If you knew all, how must you despise and hate me! My dear, generous Valeria! I intreat and conjure you, never let him know my mean selfishness. But I am convinced you will not: you are too noble-minded to seek to raise your own merit, by comparing it with another's baseness. What a presumptuous creature I was, to suppose it possible for me to supplant you! Do not triumph over me: alas! I am but too much humbled already.

G 6

I must

I must endeavour to make my future conduct atone for my past. I will strive to suppress a passion so unworthy of its object:—a passion that has ruined him! Oh! the smart of this reflection is not to be borne!—remove it—my tender, pitying friend—remove this agonizing thought! I have proposed to the marquis, to follow you to England; promising to write to you, and to intreat my brother and sister in his favour. I have already written to my brother; yet surely it was unnecessary;—can St. Clair want any eloquence but his own to plead for him? If you have pity, if you have gratitude, if you know how to distinguish merit, if all the graces that can adorn a human being can move you,—speak peace to this charming mourner. I adjure you, by all the sacred friendship you have promised me, make this deserving lover happy. The marchioness, his mother, is ill: as soon as she recovers, he will hasten to throw himself at your feet. If you refuse him,—never again account yourself the friend of

LEONORA MARCHMONT.

You

You will be sorry to hear lady Mary Enmore is married against her mother's consent. She has left France with her husband. I know not whether they went to England or Ireland; but I believe it was to the former. Lady Enmore is greatly incensed against her.



TO MISS MARCHMONT.—FRANCE.

LONDON.

I "TRIUMPH over you!" Ah! Leonora, how little do you know me! Nor do I think I have cause to triumph;—sensible, as I am, that love much oft'ner flows from the caprice of a lover, than the merit of the object beloved. But why, my dear girl, are you so soon discouraged? Did you think he could transfer his affection in a few days? You must give him time to forget his first passion;—you must steal imperceptibly into his heart. Have patience, my friend; continue your friendship to him; console him, but forbear to cherish his hopes: it was your wild project of sending him to England that has thus far impeded your success. If you will pursue the plan I take the liberty to trace out to you, I am persuaded you cannot fail of attaching him to you, and that more strongly than he ever was to me. Gratitude, that amiable affection, which so powerfully sways the generous

rous mind, will exert all its influence for you; and give you, on his understanding, on his honour, and his heart, a tie—additional to any I ever could have had.

May I tell you, Miss Marchmont, you are industrious to torment yourself? Why, else, those extravagant self-accusations? What is the mighty injury you have done *Monf. de St. Clair*?—Deprived him of a woman, who has not a shilling of fortune in the world:—a woman who felt no tenderer sentiments for him, than those which friendship dictated; and, in exchange, you give him riches and love.

I shall now take a separate paper, which I insist on your shewing to the marquis.

---

How, my *Leonora*, have I forfeited the place I held in your affection? Or, rather how has *Monsieur de St. Clair* attained a higher one? And a higher one he certainly does possess, or you would never have thought of making my acceptance of him the condition of the continuance of your  
friendship

friendship to me. You are cruel, my friend; you are unjust. Can I command the emotions of my heart? Does not the marquis's giving way to a passion, he ought for every reason to conquer, tell you that love is involuntary? And if it be so hard to destroy—is it, do you think, easy to create? I esteem him, I admire him;—but still, it is only esteem—it is only admiration—without a single spark of love. I shall venture to leave it even to your partial decision, whether or not, with these cold, unchangeably cold sentiments, I ought to give him my hand?

When I first knew him, I preferred him to every other male acquaintance. The friendship he professed for me, pleased and flattered me. He spoke not of love; and if his behaviour sometimes indicated it, I attributed it to the gallantry of his nation. He kept me a long time in this agreeable error; I believe by lady Enmore's advice, who knew my disposition, and rightly supposed, that a declaration on his part, would be followed by a refusal on mine. At length, she thought proper to propose him to me, as a match



match every way desirable, and greatly above any thing my circumstances in life could warrant me to expect. Her arguments were chiefly drawn from prudence; yet she did not fail to do justice to his merit, though without positively asserting—like another fair advocate of his—that he had “all the graces that can adorn a human being!” Ah! Leonora, I would to Heaven he had! ’twould be well for my peace, if——But, to return to my subject:—Wearied by lady Enmore’s importunities, I with difficulty consented to deliberate on the matter for a month. I exacted, in return for this concession, that she would not let him know she had mentioned the affair to me at all. In this, however, I have good reason to believe she did not keep her word with me; for he—flattered, without doubt, by my conduct—threw off the restraint he had hitherto worn, and talked to me incessantly of his passion. I was so far moved by my sensibility of his worth, that I determined with myself to endeavour to love him; but instead of being able to effect this, I found I liked him less,



less, after I had made the resolution, than before. I was used to welcome him as a friend;—I now shunned him as a creditor, who demanded of me what he had a just title to, but what it was not in my power to pay him. The promise which had been extorted from me, constrained me to listen to him. My indefatigable friend, lady Enmore, took advantage of the time she had gained, to write to my aunt Chetwynd, whose ascendant over my mind she was no stranger to. In effect, my aunt wrote to me, and approved the marquis's addresses; but it was only on condition, if I approved them myself: and, lest her letter should influence me too much, she even advised me not to marry him, unless I loved him. I balanced no longer; but determining to break off the matter at once, I left France; thinking I could not take a more effectual method of restoring St. Clair that peace, which I was sincerely grieved to have in any measure deprived him of. After this decisive step, I am astonished to be told, he can entertain any hopes of me; even though you should have left him to imagine  
my

my going was occasioned by my aunt Chetwynd's writing to me to come home with the Domville family; which, you know, was the ostensible reason of my departure. —I cannot help thinking you have greatly softened the refusal I commissioned you to give him: it was polite, indeed—at least I intended it should be so—but it was peremptory; it was such as would not have encouraged him to follow me. If he chuses to come to England, I cannot prevent him: but that I may not in any respect be the object of his voyage, I declare solemnly, if he comes, I will not see him.

I flatter myself you are too just to be offended at my paying so little regard to your threats and intreaties on this subject, when I tell you, that my uncle and aunt Chetwynd have acknowledged to me, it would have made them miserable, had I married a foreigner. After this, I should refuse Monsieur de St. Clair without hesitating, were he dearer to me than the “ruddy” drops that warm my heart.” I am sure he himself would confess, that I ought to do so, if he knows any thing of my obligations to

to them. They have been more than parents to me, ever since it pleased the Almighty to deprive me of my father and mother. Their pecuniary favours to me, only, considered—without mentioning their affection, their indulgence, the graceful manner of giving which, doubles the gift, —I say, their pecuniary favours, only, considered, I should be the basest and most ungrateful of human kind, were I capable of voluntarily giving a moment's pain to the honourable donors.

It has just come into my head, to desire you to let the marquis peruse this letter. If he be offended at the freedom wherewith I have treated him, let him consider, that the subject required plain dealing. I set a high value on his friendship; but I would rather lose it, than possess his love.

Notwithstanding your threats, my dear Leonora, I am bold enough to subscribe myself,

Your affectionate friend,

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

I grieve

I grieve for poor lady Mary. I have a letter from her mother, which gives me much reason to fear it will be no easy matter to reconcile them. Excluding the most unhappy circumstance of being at variance with a parent, the little runaway will still be a considerable sufferer, as she has but ten thousand pounds independent of lady Enmore.



TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

LONDON.

“DOES Sir Edward Marchmont love my Valeria?”—Dear madam, why did you ask this question? You know not how sensibly it mortified me. Yet I will answer it with sincerity;—he does not; and I had believed he did.—Let me, my honoured, my beloved friend, confess to you all my folly.—While I was at Hermitage, Sir Edward’s behaviour to me was such, that it was almost impossible for me not to imagine myself dear to him. This fatal persuasion made me little careful to shut my heart against him. Mrs. Wentworth’s insinuations confirmed my error: but she, I am convinced, was very far from having any intention to deceive me; she was deceived herself. The tender and constant attention, the delicate compliments he paid me, seemed to have their source in his heart: he followed me every where, without appearing to know that he did so; it could

could not be mere chance, that always placed his chair next mine: if his hand accidentally touched mine, he trembled: he would frequently heave deep sighs, even in the midst of a chearful conversation; and look on me with a tenderness, which unnecessarily borrowed from melancholy, an additional power to touch the soul. This description, far from being exaggerated, is really imperfect: judge from it, if I had not reason to think he loved me.

To apologize, in some sort, for my weakness, I will draw you a faint picture—for a faint one it must be—of this accomplished man:

Sir Edward Marchmont is indisputably one of the best made men in England; tall, rather slender, and inimitably proportioned; his person gives the joint ideas of strength and activity, dignity and gracefulness. His face is strikingly handsome; though not regularly so: a clear brown complexion; rosy lips; white and even teeth; open forehead; arched brow; and dark hazel eyes, penetrating, sparkling with vivacity and good-humour, and, when he pleases, seducingly

ducingly tender. His address is most polite; manly, but not forward. No pen can describe the varied charms of his conversation. Would you form an idea of it?—Imagine every thing that sound sense, extensive knowledge, lively wit, and generously warm feelings can dictate; dressed in the most elegant words, that language can furnish.

Allow me to add a most romantic excuse, for a romantic passion:—Hermitage is the very land of love: Nature has dealt it beauties with a lavish hand; which have been heightened and improved by the taste of its owner. The wild variety of the scene delights and surprises the eye.—The Spring had thrown her verdant mantle o'er the lawns; and those early flowers, of hasty duration, — messengers of Spring, to announce the coming Summer—shed their grateful perfumes around. The pleasing stillness of the new—and then but half-dressed groves, was interrupted only by cascades; gurgling streams; and the notes of euphony and gladness, poured forth by the little feathered songsters.—Rural de-  
lights



lights create a placid serenity in the mind, which is wonderfully favourable to love; and the sweet sadness inspired by pity, in beholding the unfortunate mistress of this charming place, gives a softness to the heart, which disposes it easily and deeply to receive the impressions of a virtuous passion.

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I wrote the above yesterday; and have read it over this morning with blushes. I was going to destroy it, but restrained myself: my friend, my parent, you have a right to my confidence; and never will I defraud you of it. I have ever found you a far more indulgent monitor, than that within my own breast. I have erred deeply; but not inexcusably; and I will—yes, madam, I will recover my past involuntary misconduct: your Valeria will “act like herself!” with pride I quote this sentence from one of your affectionate letters. To spare myself the pain of renewing this dangerous subject, I send you a letter



of Mrs. Wentworth's: she has been my correspondent ever since I left her.

Is it not surprising, that Sir Edward did not fix his choice on a woman of family?

"And why surprising? A merchant's daughter, in the eyes of reason and religion—"

But in the eyes of the world, madam, she will disgrace the Marchmont blood.

"Such things are done every day."

True; but for what are they done? Necessity or avarice: the first cannot be Sir Edward's motive, and he has a soul above the last. He loves her then; 'tis very plain; he can have no other inducement.—I relapse into folly.—Forgive me.—'Tis the last time.—I now quit the subject for ever. Nor my pen, nor my thoughts, shall dwell on him more.

I cannot tell you what stay I shall make here. Mr. Domville talks of setting out soon for Ireland; but the Linfield family will not hear of our going. Observe, I include myself. I have the honour to stand very high in Lady Linfield's good graces; and am a singular favourite with his lordship;

ship; who very confidently swears, I am the handsomest woman in the world.

You ask me news of Lady Mary Enmore—Webster, I mean:—I know nothing more concerning her, than her mother has already told you. I flatter myself I need not say what answer I intend to give to Lady Enmore's too generous proposition. God forbid I should ever accept what ought to be the property of another! Far from the meanness of usurping Lady Mary's place in her mother's favour, I shall do every thing in my power to restore her to it: even at the hazard of disobliging Lady Enmore, for whom I have a high consideration.

Adieu. I am going, with Lady Linfield and Lady Lucy, to pay half a hundred formal visits: do you not envy

Your

VALERIA O'BRYEN?

To the COUNTESS DOWAGER ENMORE.—FRANCE.

LONDON.

WHEN mere compliments daily exhaust the language that should be sacred to friendship, and unfelt and undue thanks are given in the most weighty and significant form of words, it becomes impossible for a sincere and justly grateful heart to express its feelings. I must then, my dear lady Enmore, forbear to make you those acknowledgements I owe to your generosity; conscious of my utter incapacity to pay them as I ought. But I expect you will do me the justice to believe, I have the deepest sense of your kindness to me.

I intreat you not to be offended, that I frankly tell you, I cannot accept your offer:—I dare not; it would be robbery! While you have a child, or a grandchild, in the world, nothing shall prevail on me to take any part of your fortune.

I have, a long time, honoured myself by regarding you on the equal ground of friendship:

friendship: excuse me, that I am unwilling now to descend from this height, and look up to you as a benefactress. 'Tis true, you seek to soften the idea of dependance, by calling me daughter; but it will not do. Pardon the pride of noble blood. It was not till after many painful struggles, I could consent to be supported by my uncle Chetwynd. The inexpressible delicacy of his conduct to me, at length reconciled me to receiving unreturnable obligations; and at present my gratitude is even pleasurable; but I must say, I should not chuse to have any other hand bestow the like favours.— Wrong me not so much, as to suppose, I at all doubt *your* delicacy: but relationship makes a wide difference, in this case, between Mr. Chetwynd and your ladyship.

Were it necessary to multiply excuses for my unavoidable refusal, I might add, that my aunt Chetwynd would have good reason to accuse me of ingratitude, were I to chuse any other mother than herself. See! madam, I have both a father and a mother!— Poor lady Mary has no father; and you would deprive her of her mother!



I am sensible that it must be a very trying thing, when the object of the tender cares, and fond anxieties of years, by an imprudent marriage, blasts all those long-cherished, high expectations, which a parent naturally entertains for a beloved child. But who is the person injured by this rash step? —The party who takes it, undoubtedly. Will it be justifiable then, my friend, to punish your daughter with your everlasting displeasure, because she has ruined *herself*?

Mr. Webster, you say, is meanly born; has dissipated his fortune and reputation:—a dreadful character! What countenance will be necessary to lady Mary, to screen her from the censures of the world!—from the contempt and ill-treatment of the very man, to whom she has sacrificed so much! Can you, who have hitherto been her best friend, forsake her in that critical conjuncture, when she most wants your assistance? —yes, more than in the helpless days of infancy. I beg you to consider, how much your neglect will put her in her husband's power: and by your own account of him, it is too probable he will abuse his advantages

tages.—O, do not, by your severity, increase all the miseries that may be consequent on her misconduct.

I ask no more for this giddy couple, at present, than forgiveness and friendship. I would by no means recommend it to you, to give them up any part of your fortune, nor even to promise it; only forbear to say you will *not* make them your heirs, and Mr. Webster must naturally suppose you *will*. The consideration of his own interest will induce him to behave well to his wife: and perhaps his respect, esteem, and gratitude, may empower you to influence him to a reformation of his life. I strongly advise you to make no disposition of your fortune at present. Settle it, at your death, on lady Mary and her children. If you do not give it to her, to whom will you give it? The persons that would accept it, in prejudice to her rights, would, by that single action, prove themselves unworthy of it: and sure you will, at least, shew a preference to your daughter, amongst the *undeserving*! Can you, with a safe conscience, bequeath an estate you received from lord

Enmore, to any other than lord Enmore's only child? The discretionary power he left you, was not, I imagine, in any case, to deprive lady Mary of his fortune; but solely to restrain her from the very fault, which, notwithstanding his caution, she has unhappily committed. He, doubtless, depended on your tenderness for her. Will you, then, betray the trust reposed in you by one of the best, and fondest of husbands? Would it not be dishonourable? Would it not be dishonest?

Pardon me, dearest lady Enmore, that, for a moment waving the respect due to your superior understanding and maturer years, I have presumed to offer you my advice. Be assured, the very great liberties I have taken with you, were dictated by real esteem;—by that honest affection and warm gratitude, with which I have the honour to be,

Your ladyship's much obliged,

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

To

TO MISS O'BRYEN.—LONDON.

MADAM,

POPLAR-HILL.

THE letter which I have the honour to inclose, will, I hope, sufficiently apologize for this liberty.

I cannot blame Miss Marchmont for seeking to form a connection between you, and a man, who appears to her so amiable: but I wish—I very much wish—she had not fixed on me for his advocate. I possess none of the persuasive powers of eloquence; and if I did, neither my honour, nor my conscience, would allow me to use them in the cause of a person, whose character I know only by the report of a—perhaps partial—friend. On such grounds, I could not recommend a man to any lady's choice; much less to Miss O'Bryen!—the woman on earth—in whose happiness I am most interested.

You may perhaps be surprized, that I did not make an earlier application to you;

H 5

as



as you will perceive by the date of my sister's letter, that I must have been in possession of it several days. I was embarrassed—extremely embarrassed—how to interfere in a matter of such nicety. I came, at last, to the resolution of sending you the letter itself. Nothing need be added to what Miss Marchmont says of the marquis de St. Clair:—I dare not—*cannot* plead for him.

It would be highly presumptuous to desire to know your determination; yet, madam, allow me to request—most earnestly and respectfully to request—this mark of your confidence: I shall esteem it as a singular favour:—have the goodness, the condescension, to relieve my anxious heart. I am deeply concerned—you know not—alas! you will never know—how deeply I am concerned. Pardon the confusion of my style. I find no expressions to do justice to the warmth of my friendship.

May the happy—the supremely happy man, you shall honour with your regard, have as lively a sense of you transcendent merit, as

EDWARD MARCHMONT.

To

TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—

POPLAR-HILL.

LONDON.

IT is a sensible satisfaction to me, that you did not join with Miss Marchmont:—to have been unmoved by your united persuasions, must have given me an air of obstinacy.

Give me leave, Sir Edward, to set you right in your opinion of the marquis de St. Clair. My friend is not *partial*, she is only just to his merit, which is really uncommon. Gratitude obliges me to make this acknowledgment, though it reproaches my insensibility.

Your professions of friendship demand my warmest thanks. Be assured, your esteem is essential to the happiness of

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

LONDON.

SUPPORT me! my inestimable friend! —Pride has hitherto been my chief prop, on that “weak side, where most our nature fails;” and pride no longer aids me. I blushed at the meanness of bestowing my heart on a man to whom I was indifferent, who even loved another. Fatally for my peace, I am now convinced that I am the mistress of his affections; although for some cause, to me unknown, he is obliged to give his hand to Miss Ormsby. I inclose you the copy of a letter I received from him this morning. I dare not make any comments.—Yet, pardon me, I must. It is evident to me, that Sir Edward’s mind was ill at ease when he wrote that letter; every expression betrays disquiet:—he was “extremely embarrassed:”—there was nothing in the affair that could have embarrassed an indifferent person. Does he not seem displeased with his sister? Yet he is

not used to take offence without a cause.—  
 Why should he—the most generous-minded  
 of men—suspect her of partiality, in prais-  
 ing a gentleman, whom he has no reason to  
 suppose undeserving of her encomiums?  
 Then, his extreme desire to know my de-  
 termination!—does he not even intimate,  
 that he is “deeply concerned” in it?—“Re-  
 lieve my anxious heart!”—I would to  
 Heaven it was in my power! What—oh!  
 what would I not do to restore him that  
 tranquillity, which must for ever be a stran-  
 ger to my own breast?

I cannot write—my tears blot the paper.  
 —Pity

Your

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

To



TO SIR EDWARD MARCHMONT, BART.—  
POPLAR-HILL.

LONDON.

WE came to town yesterday. Sir James called at your house this morning, and there learned you were at lord Methuen's seat. Are you not a strange fellow, Sir Edward? Upon my life, one would almost imagine you were shunning us. However, I suppose you will now venture to London, as we are here to introduce you to Mr. Ormsby. You were too shame-faced to introduce yourself!—Dear! how modest it is!

“ On your allegiance, *Marchmont*,

“ By all your hopes, I do command you, *come*.”

A fine girl, worth forty thousand pounds, is not an object to be trifled with. I am already astonished that Hannah has not forgotten you, so many weeks as you have  
been

been absent. Now, two hours in a city, four in a country town, and two days in solitude, would be the utmost limits to the constancy of a woman of spirit, of an

EMILY CONWAY.

To the RIGHT HON. LADY METHUEN.—  
POPLAR-HILL.

LONDON.

TIME ever flies on leaden wings, when my Louisa is absent. I have been but a week away from you; so says the almanack; but my heart contradicts it. How solitary is this house without you!—how silent without my prattling boy!

Our dear Marchmont is with me; I would not suffer him to go to his own house; I do not leave him a moment alone; his is not the kind of grief that should be indulged. I endeavour to lead him into agreeable company—into amusing dissipation. All will not do: a settled melancholy has taken possession of his mind. In presence of the Ormsby family, he strives to assume an air of sprightliness, but with so little success, that I am astonished they do not discover his affectation. Miss Ormsby must have very little penetration, or a great deal of vanity, if she can believe he loves her.

her. From my soul I pity him: condemned to feign a passion that he does not feel, and to conceal one that preys—ah! my Louisa, I fear—upon his life. He reproaches himself with weakness. For my part, I am astonished at the noble firmness, wherewith he sacrifices the dearest wishes of his heart to motives of generosity and honour. Yet I sincerely wish he had been less determined. Now, indeed, it is too late to retract: but before he came to town, I think he might have made an effort to free himself from this most irksome bondage. I could not bring him over to my opinion: perhaps he was in the right. In his situation, I should probably have thought—though I might not have been able to act—like him. If I have any knowledge of my heart, it would be apter to dupe my judgment in my friend's favour than in my own.

You ask my opinion of the Ormsby family.—To begin with Mr. Ormsby:—he is a plain, sensible, good kind of man; has rather more of the merchant than the gentleman in his manners.

Mrs.



Mrs. Ormsby has more politeness, and less understanding than her husband. She has been very pretty in her time; and, unfortunately, thinks herself so still: pays the most critical attention to her dress, and gives herself several little airs, that would better suit her daughters.

Every one allows, that youth is the monopolizer of beauty. How comes it, then, that women who have been handsome in their younger years, carry the idea of their loveliness into advanced life? Yet how, indeed, can it be expected they should perceive the gradual decay of their beauty, when they are insensible of the progress of their years?

“ ’Tis greatly wise to know, before we’re told,

“ The melancholy news that we grow old.”

Aye, or to believe it when told. Why cannot women’s ambition be directed rather to the embellishment of their minds, than their forms? What a happiness it would be, if the beauty of all females was, like lady Methuen’s, eclipsed by the superior brightness

brightness of their understandings! Age, then, instead of stealing away all their charms, would only deprive them of some trifling, extrinsic advantages, and bestow some intrinsically valuable ones in their room. TIME is, in the main, a generous robber: with one hand, indeed, he wrests from us part of our property, whether we will or not; but with the other, he offers us more than double the worth of what he takes: it is at our own option to accept, or refuse his liberality; but if we refuse it, we have only ourselves to blame.

Amongst those who have more to fear from the predatory hand of Time, than to hope for from his bounteous one, I think we may fairly rank lady Conway. She is what her mother has been; and, if I do not mistake, will be what her mother is. I would not be united to such a woman for kingdoms;—so volatile, so gay, so vain and inconsiderate; so politely inattentive to her husband, and, at the same time, so very attentive to other men—Take care of your forehead, my good Sir James; if horns will grow out of lead, you have but  
a sorry

a sorry chance of escaping such an ornament. It is a fashionable one, however; and that is some consolation. Luckily, he does not care three-pence for his wife; which, for the repose of my sex, I heartily wish was the case of every honest man, who has the ill fortune to be married to a coquette.

As to Miss Ormsby herself, I need say little more, than that Sir Edward's description of her—which, without doubt, you remember—was a very just one. I really believe her to be an amiable girl; yet, still, still she is not worthy of Marchmont! There is nothing exalted in her character: her talents, her understanding, are not above the common level.—In a word, she is not an O'Bryen! He would never have distinguished her, but from the persuasion that he was necessary to her happiness. A few more such examples, and your sex would no longer accuse mine of the ingratitude, or caprice, or cruelty; of continually despising the woman who loves unasked.

Yesterday—Marchmont being fortunately engaged at Mr. Ormsby's—I  
dined

dined with our friend dean Domville. The company was composed of his elder brothers, lord Linfield, and Mr. Domville; their ladies; Miss O'Bryen, the young countess dowager of Severn, Mr. and Mrs. Warner, and two or three young gentlemen, who vied with each other in rendering the lowliest homage to the awe-creating, but all-attractive charms of the fair Hibernian, who treated them all with equal politeness, and equal indifference. In vain did the majestic beauty disregard their attention; in vain did the languishing eyes of the right honourable widow court it: 'twas impossible for Miss O'Bryen to be unnoticed; 'twas impossible for any other woman to be taken notice of in her presence.

I perfectly agree with you, Louisa, that this fine young creature possesses a mind equal to her form. She spoke but little at the dean's, and that on common topics; but I want no other proof of her good sense, than her being so totally devoid of vanity. How unconscious does she appear of her superlative loveliness! How undesirous of admiration! What a dignified modesty in  
her



her deportment! Certainly she is a most charming woman. Ah! why was she not destined for my deserving friend?

I should not forget to tell you, Miss O'Bryen enquired for you in such a manner, as convinces me you have a place in her friendship. I am sorry, very sorry you cannot cultivate it. 'Tis well you are not in town; you could not avoid visiting her; and I would not, for any consideration, Sir Edward should see her again: yet I doubt that he could love her to a greater excess than he does already, or be more deeply involved in consequential misery. I know not whether to pity or admire him most. To be obliged to resign the object he adores! to wed another!—with so much sensibility, so much delicacy as he possesses—how painful must be the conflict!—how great the resolution that enables him to make the fearful sacrifice!

The marriage preparations are not begun; and, I conjecture, will proceed slowly. I shall not be the person to hurry them; I shall regard them with an eye of horror. O, ye immortal powers! that watch over  
the

the interests of the virtuous,—why do you sleep?—My wretched friend!—Louisa, my dearest Louisa, let us join in prayer to Heaven, to avert the woes that threaten him:—doubly difficult to borne, as they insultingly approach under the mock visage of joy. A wedding!—a grave would be preferable to such a wedding. This subject harrows up my soul. Adieu. Write to me:—console me.

Here is a long, ill-connected letter. I shall look on a concise, regular answer, as a tacit reproof of my prolixity and ramblings.

Ever your devoted,

METHUEN.

To

TO MISS O'BRYEN.—LONDON.

DUBLIN.

YOUR “tears blot the paper!” Alas! my dearest Valeria, so do mine. Come to me, my gentle, suffering girl; we shall weep together—we shall console one another: you will condemn yourself—you will call yourself weak; I will vindicate you—I will praise your fortitude. Leave that fatal place. Mr. Domville’s stay is uncertain. Allow me to send your uncle for you. He shall not suspect that I have any particular motive in desiring your speedy return. Write to me immediately. I shall not ask him to go, till I have your permission. I do not—need I tell you I do not—seek to controul you?

I am at Sir John O’Byren’s. He is not expected to live many days. I acknowledge I have but little solicitude about him; yet, as my brother, or rather as my fellow-creature,

I am

I am shocked to see him tottering on the verge of eternity. Shortly will he be deprived of the wealth he has been laying up, with unremitted assiduity, for so many years:—driven from all his loved possessions on earth, and sent into a world, for which he has made no provision. 'Tis true, his character has not been marked by any of those black actions, to which we usually affix the appellation of crimes: his sins have been rather those of omission; but a series of those negative sins, are—if I dare form a judgment of them—more dangerous—at least they make a man more despicable—than great and positive transgressions, counterbalanced by active virtue.

I am called away—Sir John is worse.

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When I was obliged to break off yesterday evening, our unhappy relation was thought to be at the point of death. He is

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better



better to-day, but not so much as to warrant the slightest hope of his recovery.

I received a letter from you this morning. I find it dictated by the natural loftiness of your mind, as your former one by that natural tenderness of heart, which so finely tempers it. Suffer me to expostulate :—my beloved, you are too severe ! Why impose silence on yourself, on the subject of your peculiarly unfortunate—but not in the least degree blameable—passion ? Complaint is a sweet mental anodyne : why would you deny yourself the use of it ? Never can you tell your griefs to a more sympathetic heart, than that of her you so often endearingly call your parent. Do not think I wish you to cherish a sentiment that must be destructive to your happiness : far from it ; but to overcome this sentiment, will not be the work of a moment. You cannot command your thoughts : do not, then, create for yourself unnecessary pain, by endeavouring to command your pen, or rather tongue, for I trust I shall soon be blest with your society. Return, thou darling of my soul ! Your dear mind is wounded.

ed. Can the balsamic language of friendship heal it? O, return, and it shall be poured out from the very heart of

Your inexpressibly affectionate

CAROLINE CHETWYND.

TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

LONDON.

I TOLD you briefly, in my last, my dear madam, of my meeting with lady Mary Webster. I have been to see her twice or thrice since. She receives me with cordiality, and seeming friendship; I say seeming—for I am sure she does not love my person, but knows she may depend on my principles. Being unhappy, she stands in need of a friend to console her; and is obliged to attach herself to me, for want of a more desirable one. For my part, I sincerely wish her well; I pity her; I shall do every thing in my power for her benefit; but I cannot say, I esteem her. When I first knew her, I was inclined to love her: acquaintance discovering to me the unamiableness of her disposition, I found I could not. While we lived together in France, my dislike to her daily increased;—it really made me miserable; it is a most painful thing to hate any body; and, I own  
to



to you, I *almost* hated her. She had so many mean, malicious, nameless ways of provoking, that had I not despised her, and respected her mother, so much as I did, I should have found it very difficult to have constantly kept guard over a temper, so impatient of affront as mine naturally is. We parted with great civility on both sides: but, I confess, I carried away a sense of her injurious treatment. I am not revengeful; which I owe rather to education and principle, than to nature. I never return an injury, but I feel it strongly, and rarely forgive it, till the person is in some species of distress, or that I have done them a kindness, which I catch at an opportunity of doing, with more eagerness than I should exert in favour of one who had done me neither good nor harm. When lady Enmore proposed to adopt me for her daughter, and to settle her fortune on me, in prejudice to lady Mary; all my little animosities against her died within my breast; I felt myself interested in her welfare; I pleaded for her as I should have done for a friend. Since the recommencement of our



acquaintance in England, I find her in distress, which excites my pity, and consequently strengthens my desire of being serviceable to her. She seems heartily to repent her rashness; and complains in general of Mr. Webster's behaviour to her. She particularly resents his not giving way to her desire of living in Ireland. "I have no friends in England," said she to me, "and very few acquaintances, except some that are worse than none."

A lady below to wait on me—

---

It was lady Mary: she is just gone. I have not yet recovered my surprize. I must give you our conference.—Observing she was very melancholy, I chid her in a tender manner, for indulging low spirits. "I cannot help it—I cannot help it," said she, striking her hand, with some degree of violence, against the arm of the sofa on which she leaned.

"Come, come, my friend," cried I, "be wise; at least be consistent: you  
"thought

“ thought too little before marriage ; don’t  
 “ think too much after.”

“ Too little, indeed ! I was infatuated !  
 “ Would that past time could be recalled !  
 “ —hasty actions retrieved !”

“ Why will you torment yourself, by  
 “ vainly wishing for impossibilities ? Con-  
 “ sult your good sense, and you will find,  
 “ that when an evil is without remedy, we  
 “ have nothing to do, but to endeavour  
 “ to bear it in the best manner we are  
 “ able.”

“ True ; but there are some things not  
 “ to be borne :—ingratitude, for instance.  
 “ Did I sacrifice my fortune and my friends”  
 —sure, she might have added, her duty—  
 “ only to be a slave ?”

“ Ah ! my dear, your pride is ill-timed.  
 “ Our sex was not born to rule. While  
 “ we are in a single state, we may take  
 “ some airs on us ; but when we are mar-  
 “ ried, we can have no degree of merit,  
 “ without meekness and submission.”

“ Heavens ! do I hear this slavish maxim  
 “ from the lips of my spirited countrywo-  
 “ man ?—But you are not married.”

“ If being married, I should act in opposition to this slavish maxim, as you call it, I should be wrong, even in my own opinion; and, consequently, my example ought not to be followed.”

She was silent for some minutes; and then, as if unable to contain her resentment any longer, cried, “ Could you submit to coldness, slights, and insults? Could you bear to visit, and be incessantly visited by a rival?”

“ O, lady Mary, be cautious of giving way to jealousy;—that cruel, destructive, self-deluding passion. I know, at this moment, such an instance of its deadly effects, as, were I at liberty to divulge to you, would oblige you to drive the fell intruder from your breast.”

“ Hear me, Miss O'Bryen, only hear me, and judge if I have not cause for my suspicions. About ten days ago, Mr. Webster brought a lady Conway and Miss Ormsby to pay their respects to me. He told me they were daughters to a great merchant of this city, to whom he had been formerly apprenticed, but had  
“ quitted,



“ quitted, on an uncle bequeathing him a  
 “ fortune that set him above trade: a for-  
 “ tune, by the way, of which I don’t be-  
 “ lieve he has at present a single shilling.  
 “ I did not decline an acquaintance with  
 “ these ladies; but he obliged me to re-  
 “ turn their visit sooner than I intended.  
 “ Lady Conway has since been twice at my  
 “ house; and her sister very frequently,  
 “ though I never invite nor welcome her;  
 “ but, on the contrary, treat her with as  
 “ much coldness, as it is possible to shew  
 “ without being downright rude. She  
 “ comes in the morning;—Webster asks  
 “ her to spend the day;—I say nothing;—  
 “ yet she stays. Then, their mutual  
 “ looks, their whole behaviour, their very  
 “ words——”

She paused, as expecting I should speak.  
 —It was totally beyond my power.—She  
 went on.——

“ My woman tells me there was a strong  
 “ attachment between my husband and  
 “ Miss Ormsby; and that some improper  
 “ —(she believes not absolutely criminal)—  
 “ familiarities had passed, between them;



“ which being discovered by the father,  
“ Miss was sent away to a sister of her mother’s, who is married to a clergyman,  
“ that lives near a hundred miles from  
“ London, and her lover compelled to  
“ leave the house. His uncle dying some  
“ little time after, he made proposals for  
“ her, and was refused by her father. Six  
“ months ago, my evil genius led him to  
“ Paris; and not till then was his mistress  
“ permitted to return home.”

I had now collected my scattered spirits.  
—“ And how,” demanded I, “ could your  
“ woman come by such particular information of transactions, which, it is to be  
“ supposed, were kept very secret?”

“ She has a cousin that waits on Mrs.  
“ Ormsby, and is much in her confidence.”

“ So Mrs. Ormsby has the weakness to  
“ trust her servant with matters of such  
“ importance; the servant betrays her lady  
“ to her cousin; the cousin betrays the  
“ waiting-woman to you— How can you  
“ depend on such creatures?”

“ My own observations confirm their  
“ veracity.”

“ You

" You should distrust your own observa-  
 " tions: the most sensible people, when  
 " under the influence of jealousy, often  
 " both think and act very absurdly. I beg  
 " your ladyship's pardon for my freedom;  
 " but I am too much your friend to flatter  
 " you in this pernicious error. Consider,  
 " the story may have no other foundation,  
 " than the malice of Mrs. Ormsby's maid:  
 " perhaps the young lady has disobliged  
 " her, and she takes this method of being  
 " revenged; or possibly the whole has been  
 " fabricated by your own servant, in order  
 " to make herself of consequence to you."

" Pshaw!" said she peevishly, " indeed,  
 " indeed, Valeria, you cannot think your-  
 " self as you would have me do."

" Why, my dear lady Mary, if these  
 " young people had a liking for each other,  
 " what could have prevented their marry-  
 " ing, when Mr. Webster had a compe-  
 " tent independant fortune?"

" Ormsby would not give his consent,"  
 she answered.

" However," said I, " his disapproba-  
 " tion must have been the only obstacle to

“ their union; and if such a powerful  
“ temptation could not induce his daugh-  
“ ter to break through her duty to him,  
“ can you suppose she would be guilty of  
“ the far greater crime, of endeavouring to  
“ ensnare the affections of a married man?”

“ But why should you think he ever  
“ asked her to marry him against her fa-  
“ ther’s consent? I dare say he would not  
“ have taken her without a fortune. I  
“ know you will catch at this, as a proof  
“ of his not loving her; but it proves no  
“ more to me, than that his passion was  
“ not a generous one.”

You may be in the right, thought I: it is probable enough he would not marry the woman he liked, without money; since he married one he could not like, for the sake of it.

Here a pause of several minutes ensued; during which she looked on me with uneasy earnestness; and I sat in a posture of melancholy attention—my thoughts, I own to you, extremely disturbed: alas! I need not say why they were so. My God! thought I, is the amiable Marchmont destined to an  
union

union with such an infamous coquette?—The cruel, the ungenerous reflection, was condemned as soon as formed. I blamed myself, for suffering my opinion of a stranger to be influenced by one I knew to be prejudiced. Slight is the foundation on which a jealous temper can build suspicion:—has not the spotless purity of Harriet Wentworth been suspected? I dare not, do not doubt that Miss Ormsby is perfectly innocent. I felt my mind expand beyond the narrowness of partiality: my conscious heart was elated with honest triumph—not over lady Mary—but over my own wayward passions. 'Tis mean to glory in our superiority over others,—great to overcome ourselves.

I exerted all the strength of reasoning I am mistress of, to argue her ladyship out of her unwarrantable jealousy:—my endeavours were quite fruitless.

“ You talk very plausibly,” said she;  
 “ but while I have so much reason to think  
 “ as I do, it is not in my power to think  
 “ otherwise. Wherefore am I detained in  
 “ England so much against my inclination?

He



“ He drew me here at first, on the thin-  
 “ spun pretence, that his affairs required  
 “ his presence. I did not then ask what  
 “ these affairs were ; and if I now enquire,  
 “ receive only the most evasive answers.”

We were here interrupted by the entrance of lady Lucy Domville.

Now, my dear aunt, are you not surprised to find lady Mary trusting the formerly hated and envied Valeria with a secret, of a nature so mortifying to herself? I am convinced she did not come to me with that intention ; but being accidentally led into the subject, was incapable of restraining the impetuosity of her temper. She has treated me with the confidence of a friend, however, let her motives for it be what they will ; and I must endeavour to return it by the good offices of one. I shall go to her to-morrow, on purpose to give her the best advice in my power. I am apprehensive she will be so unguarded as to say something to provoke her husband ; an imprudence which cannot but have disagreeable consequences. I shall strive to make her believe, the behaviour she thinks so reprehensible,

hensible, is only the effect of a friendship contracted in younger years; or, at most, of a tenderer passion subsided into friendship. This is my own opinion of the matter: were I to form any other, I should consider myself wanting in candour and generosity. The most innocent are frequently the most liable to the malevolence of slander: sensible of the rectitude of their intentions, they dream not of becoming the objects of censure, and consequently take no pains to guard against it. Prudence, with regard to this world, is perhaps a more necessary qualification than virtue itself.

Although I have already swelled this letter to an enormous size, I cannot close it without informing you, I had the honour to please the duke of Granville's eye the other night, at a play. He protested, with great warmth, I was the most perfect beauty he had ever beheld; with a good deal more, to the same purpose. Dean Domville, lord Linfield's youngest brother, who is very well acquainted with the duke, happened to be beside him, and said pleasantly, "If  
" I could introduce your grace to that  
" young

“ young lady, might I reckon upon your  
 “ interest for the first vacant bishoprick ?”  
 He asked my name ; and upon being told,  
 repeated it twice, with eagerness and emo-  
 tion. “ Pray, sir, do you know her fa-  
 “ mily ?” The dean replied, that he did  
 not ; but told him I was an Irishwoman :  
 upon which he asked no more questions ;  
 but appeared remarkably reserved and  
 thoughtful for the rest of the evening ; fre-  
 quently looking on me with earnestness, but  
 drawing off his eyes, and affecting to ap-  
 pear unconcerned, when he thought himself  
 observed by the dean, who was extremely  
 puzzled to what motive to impute a beha-  
 viour that seemed to him so strange. From  
 pure curiosity, he came to lord Linfield’s  
 the next morning ; gave the above recital  
 to lady Lucy, and made some enquiries  
 about me. She explained the mystery to  
 him ; and he very kindly offered his assist-  
 ance to reconcile me to his grace. I wish  
 much to be on terms of friendship with so  
 near a relation ; but I shall not stoop to any  
 mean submission to bring it about. I have  
 never done any thing to disoblige him. My  
 mother



mother married without his consent ; but she married a gentleman—a man of honour, of family ; one who was—nearly, at least—her equal. The fault, if it becomes me to call it one in her, did by no means justify his severity to her ; and even if it did, I am not in any degree answerable for it. The truth is, I think he ought rather to seek me, than I him : yet I shall be contented to pay him this compliment, as he is my mother's father ; but trust me, I shall not forget I am the haughty Sir William O'Bryen's daughter. With all this pride, you will believe I have no great chance of succeeding with this proud nobleman : the affair is not of much consequence, however. I have great reason to be thankful that it is not on him I am dependant ; but on those, who, possessed of a just degree of spirit themselves, know how to forgive even an exuberance of it in another. I ought to be pardoned for being proud, because I am poor ;—rich people are without excuse : affluence should give humility ;—but poverty elevates the well-born soul ! I feel I should be much less lofty, if I was rich.



rich—*apropos* to rich—Mr. Domville tells me, he has my uncle's orders to accommodate me with what money I may want. I have no occasion for any at present: I have always three times as much as I know what to do with. I am resolved I will not be extravagant, if I can help it, though my uncle does all he can to spoil me. 'Tis not easy for me here to suppress such expressions of gratitude, as neither his, nor your delicate generosity will allow me to make use of. My best friends, I do not wish my obligations to you cancelled; it is impossible they should ever be so; but I pray that they may be paid by the "Giver of all good things!"—Infinite Bounty only can pay them for

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

To

TO MRS. CHETWYND.—IRELAND.

LONDON.

I HAVE seen her! the happy Ormsby! lady Mary's rival. Ah! is she no other person's rival?—"Down rising mischief!"

I found lady Mary a little indisposed; she did not see company; I sent up my name, however, and was admitted. We had near half an hour's conversation on the last subject: her jealousy is too deeply rooted, for me to be able to pluck it up; but I hope my counsel—to which she seems to pay a deference—will assist her to conduct herself with prudence: yet when I consider her irascible temper, and the mad passion that wholly possesses her mind, I cannot help fearing she will say or do something extravagant.—I thought it expedient to inform her Miss Ormsby was on the point of being married;—I would not tell her to whom.

While I staid with her, her servant entered; "Miss Ormsby is below stairs, my lady; and begs to know if——"

"Imper-

“ Impertinent animal ! Did not I tell  
“ you, I would not see any body ? ”

“ I told her so, madam ; but —— ”

“ Be gone—I will not—— ”

“ Give your lady’s compliments to Miss  
“ Ormsby,” said I, “ and tell her she will  
“ be glad to see her ? ”

The woman looked doubtful ; I nodded toward the door ; an imperial nod, I suppose,—she left the room immediately. I apologized for the liberty I had taken ; and convinced her ladyship it would have been in all respects improper to have refused the visit.—With shame I confess to you, my indulgent friend, the visit was little less painful to me than to her. My heart beat as Miss Ormsby came up stairs,—’twas a certain malicious sort of beating, that I cannot describe. I felt a kind of predetermination to hate her :—the impulse was involuntary ; as such, I hope it was not quite unpardonable : it was attended with exquisite pain ; may that atone for it !—I am convinced we can be happy only in proportion as we are good : we should cultivate benevolent dispositions in our own defence :

defence:—if hatred, envy—any evil passion—does but glance upon my mind, it disturbs my internal peace. I shall remember this; and henceforth, when any person does me an injury, I shall forgive them on account of the misery their own malignity occasions them.

You will expect me to say something of Miss Ormsby.—She is a fine girl: tall, well made, and genteel; very fair, her features handsome; a softness and modesty in her looks and behaviour, that sufficiently refute the black charge against her. But, indeed, that charge scarce needs any other refutation than its improbability: can the woman who is honoured by the addresses of such a man as Marchmont, throw away a thought on any other of his sex? Impossible! impossible!—Webster is handsome—nay, very handsome; lively, yet tender and insinuating; apparently good-humoured; has an inexhaustible fund of chit-chat:—but Sir Edward—ah! I cannot bear the comparison;—Sir Edward is a being of a superior order.

Adieu;



Adieu; my woman tells me I have not half an hour to dress for dinner.

---

It would be more fit for me to go to bed after one o'clock in the morning, than to sit down to scribble; but my mind is not sufficiently at ease to allow me to sleep: the most distressing incident—but I need not enter into particulars.—Poor Hamilton! I respect your worth; am grateful for your love; I weep for your affliction;—but, alas! it is not in my power to do more: I, too,

“ ——— Drag a hopeless chain;

“ And all that I inflict, endure.”

What a painful thing it is, to give pain! And yet, madam, how many of our sex are there, who make it the business of their lives, to excite wishes they never mean to gratify? The censure, indeed, must not solely fall on us,—the men are equally culpable: each sex delights to ensnare the other. Such, O vanity! is thy power over the

the mind, that many a young person, who would shed tears of unfeigned compassion over a distress, far inferior to the pangs of slighted love, sacrifices, without compunction, the peace of a fellow-creature, to the trifling, contemptible pleasure of being admired. How cruel and base it is, to inflict the most poignant anguish, the sensible heart is capable of feeling, only to procure a very worthless and unwarrantable gratification!—Coquetry is so common a vice, we are not apt to look on it with the detestation it deserves; but a crime loses nothing of its original nature by becoming general; let guilt be divided and subdivided ten thousand, thousand times, its specific properties will still be contained within the portion of each individual.

I cannot speak of coquetry, without thinking of poor lady Mary Webster;—would not one have imagined, that nature had effectually secured such a piece of studied deformity, from the influence of vanity? No such thing;—she was determined to be thought handsome, in spite of nature, let her looking-glass contradict her as much

much as it pleased. It is none of the least pernicious attributes of vanity, that she is continually misleading her senseless votaries, to seek applause where they are worst qualified to obtain it: lady Mary possessed a genius, which, had she cultivated, would have given her a rational claim to admiration; but she preferred the mere semblance of beauty, to the reality of understanding; and art was called in, to supply the parity of nature with inefficacious profusion. But dearly has she paid for her ill-judged choice: health, the first of earthly blessings, was the price of a complexion alone. That abominable paint has hurt her constitution extremely. Strange it is, that any body in their senses should barter health, even for real beauty!—Lady Enmore had apprehensions of her being consumptive, before I left Paris; and very rationally imputed it to her use of paint; which, however, she could not prevail on her to lay aside. I fear the continuance of this destructive practice, joined to the present inquietude of her mind, may have very bad effects. Probably she dares not now ap-

pear in her natural *colours*—excuse a pun—for fear of disgusting her husband: yet, were I a man and a husband, I should think paint more disagreeable, than the most tawny skin Africa's sun ever shone on.

After saying so much against artificial complexions, it behoves me not to lay myself open to the temptation of using one, by keeping such bad hours.

*Bon soir, ma tendre amie,*

VALERIA O'BRYEN.



TO MRS. CHETWYND,—IRELAND.

LONDON.

THOU kindest, tenderest, best of friends!—my more than mother!—in what words shall I acknowledge your generous indulgence to my follies? You don't blame me—you allow me to complain—you don't expect me to conquer my unhappy love immediately. Would that I were this moment with you, that I might on my knees pour out the overflowings of my gratitude! How amiable is it thus to condescend to the errors of youth! When attained to the calm of life, thus to cast back a pitying eye, to hold out a helping hand to those who are still tossed by stormy passions!

I will fly to you:—my heart will not know peace, till it reposes itself on your affectionate bosom. I told lady Lucy you intended sending my uncle for me; whereupon she very obligingly limited her stay here to a fortnight. I wish the time was shorter. I would not be in this kingdom, when—

when—My God! what does it signify where I am—when that fatal ceremony—Oh! my heart, my breaking heart!—May he be happy!—No thought of me—I was dear to him once—do not think me vain—I am convinced he loved me:—but it is now a long time since he has seen me; not since he escorted me from Hermitage to lord Linfield's. Doubtless, he sees Miss Ormsby every day. I hardly know what I would write—O, make him happy, Heaven!—"My spirits sicken!"—I must lay down my pen.

---

I had an interview with the duke of Granville this morning: thus it happened—Lady Linfield and I went to see Mrs. Domville: on entering the drawing-room, we found only her, the dean, and a handsome, majestic looking old gentleman. The dean arose from his seat with alacrity, and taking hold of my hand, "Come, Miss O'Bryen, you will plead your cause more successfully yourself than I can do. The

“ duke of Granville, madam,” leading me up to him.

I knelt:—“ It was the dying command of the best of mothers, that if I ever had the honour to see your grace, I should thus intreat you—not to curse her memory.”

He seemed much agitated and surprized at this uncommon address, and remained silent for some time; then assuming a stern aspect,—“ Rise,” cried he, without even presenting his hand to raise me; “ your mother was the most ungrateful——”

I started up:—“ Hold, my lord; you shall not abuse my mother.”

“ She was devoid of gratitude,” said he, fiercely; “ she was devoid of duty. I renounced her, and I renounce her daughter.”

I bowed my head respectfully, as acquiescing in his determination; and tears filled my eyes, in spite of my endeavours to suppress them. Mrs. Domville, who is one of the sweetest and best natured women in the world, embraced me, and wept.

“ The

"The duke of Granville," said lady Linfield warmly, "is the only man in the kingdom that would not be happy to call Miss O'Bryen his relation."

The dean, in a resolute tone, said, "My lord, I should consider myself unworthy of the sacred character I bear, if I neglected to ——"

The duke did not care to hear a remonstrance that opened so formidably; and interrupted it by addressing himself to me.

"I do not mean to treat you with rudeness, young lady: nevertheless I must tell you plainly, that I am determined never to admit into my family, a person that bears the name of O'Bryen."

This insult roused all my father's spirit:—"And yet, my lord," answered I, "it is a name that will always confer honour on the person that bears it: and I boast less of the Sedley, than the O'Bryen blood!"

"Though I don't look on you as my relation," rejoined he, "I shall be your friend. Dean Domville has told me in what circumstances your father has left



“ you : I shall take care to make a genteel  
“ provision for you.”

○ My pride was inconceivably raised ; and  
I haughtily said, “ I am sorry your grace  
“ thought proper to make me such an of-  
“ fer, in a manner that puts it out of my  
“ power to thank you. Do not think,  
“ my lord, that I inherit as little of Sir  
“ William O’Byren’s pride, as of his for-  
“ tune. I derive from him a spirit—equal  
“ to your own ; and will never condescend  
“ to receive obligations from those who  
“ treat me with contempt. I fought your  
“ friendship only ;—you deny me that :—  
“ I disdain your wealth. I had no merce-  
“ nary views : I could have none ; for my  
“ father, with his last breath, conjured me  
“ never to accept any thing from you ; and  
“ the utmost degree of indigence could not  
“ tempt me to break his command. Nor  
“ do I need your assistance : I have an un-  
“ cle, on whom I depend with the same  
“ ease and confidence, I should do on a  
“ father ; who supports me, not only in  
“ affluence, but splendour. And, give me  
“ leave to inform your grace, I should ne-  
“ ver

“ ver have made myself known to you, if  
 “ I had not been so circumstanced, that it  
 “ is impossible to misinterpret my motives.”

I curtsied, and left the room, with an air (lady Linfield was pleased to call) gracefully majestic. Both the ladies followed me into another room, where we presently took leave of Mrs. Domville, and returned home.

I know my uncle will be pleased with his girl's boldness on this occasion: and, though you are not so proud as either he or I, I think you will not disapprove it. Perhaps I ought to have expressed some gratitude for the provision his grace would have made for me; but, I own, I was more hurt than obliged by his intention. I have been almost four years supported by friendship;—but I have not yet learned to give thanks for charity!

---

I had a letter this evening from the duke of Granville:—it surprized me beyond measure.

TO MISS O'BRYEN.

MADAM,

“ The more I reflect on your behaviour  
“ this morning, the more I am charmed  
“ with your spirit;—a spirit so becoming  
“ my grand-daughter.

“ Whatever enmity I may have had  
“ against your parents, I cannot but ap-  
“ prove the respect you bear to their me-  
“ mories: your mother probably deserved  
“ it from you; and if your father did not,  
“ your merit is the greater in paying it.

“ Your seeking a reconciliation with me  
“ from motives of disinterested duty, raises  
“ you very high in my esteem. I shall  
“ never desire you to disobey your father's  
“ injunction; but I shall find a way, not-  
“ withstanding, of expressing the interest I  
“ take in your welfare.

“ Lady Carysbrook and I shall wait on  
“ you to-morrow morning; and hope to  
“ prevail on you, lord and lady Linfield,

“ Mr.

“ Mr. Domville, and lady Lucy, to spend  
 “ some time with us at Granville-park,  
 “ where we shall go on Friday next.”

“ GRANVILLE.”

How mutable is the human mind ! The man, that six hours ago rejected my acquaintance with scorn, now courts it with respect ! I never expected, through my own pride, to find an advocate in his. I think myself extremely fortunate, in having thus ignorantly taken the readiest—perhaps the only—way to his favour.

I believe we shall all accept his invitation.

Farewell, my dear, dear aunt : I long to embrace you.

VALERIA O'BRYEN.

I need hardly tell you, that my sentiments with respect to Sir John's illness, are quite similar to yours.



To Miss O'BRYEN.—LONDON.

CHETWYND VILLA.

I AM sorry to tell you—deuce take this cant!—no, I am neither glad nor sorry to tell you, that Sir John O'Bryen has departed this life.

“ Truly, sir,” you’ll say, “ a very feeling and polite manner of informing me of the death of so near a relation !”

Come, my dear, no affectation. I know you never loved him ; nor had you ever any reason : indeed, very few people had.—He lived unloved, and died unlamented. Your father—pardon me, Valeria—your father was a libertine ; yet he was loved and respected, and deserved to be so. He had a soul!—Sir John had none ! One would not be so uncharitable as to say, he has probably by this time found out, to his cost, that he had one. Of all sinners, I take a miser to be the farthest out of the road to Heaven. Avarice is the worst of vices—the most incompatible with any degree  
of

of virtue: it blunts all the finer feelings; destroys every great and generous principle; stifles the social dispositions that bind man to man; sours the temper; and narrows the heart. In comparison with avarice, I could call other vices the pardonable effects of human frailty; but the miser breaks that grand law of benevolence, which was originally written by God's own finger on his heart.

Francis O'Bryen—I beg his pardon—Sir Francis O'Bryen is come home. He has apparently profited well by the liberal education he has received, and acquired a knowledge of the world without being corrupted by it. It is with singular pleasure my Caroline sees this only surviving male of her illustrious family, so well qualified to support the dignity of his house. His father has left him a fortune not unworthy of his name: this, without doubt, will be a great advantage to him; but had he been of a different character, it could have been none. The sunshine of wealth only serves to display a man's virtues, and expose his vices, to a larger number of beholders;—

it may dazzle the view of fools, but the steady eye of reason easily penetrates the false glare. How often have I lamented the folly and short-sightedness of those men, whom I have seen heaping up riches for their children, while they denied them such an education as would have enabled them to become a fortune! How cruel it is to suffer a youth to grow up in ignorance—perhaps in vice too—and then place him in a conspicuous point of view, that all the world may perceive his defects! For my part, I think grandeur becomes a clown as ill as a fine suit of cloaths would a monkey.

But all this time, I tell you nothing of your legacy:—five hundred pounds! I refused this pitiful bequest for you, as proudly as you could have done yourself. Sir Francis said, it was a mistake; that the sum ought—you observe the equivocating *ought*—to have been five *thousand* pounds, which he would pay into my hands immediately; and begged I would keep the error of the will a secret. I was pleased with his generosity, and still more with the manner of it: but I absolutely refused to  
deceive

deceive you; and assured him, that your delicacy would not permit you to receive such an obligation from so young a man. He was much chagrined and dissatisfied at my refusal:—said, he did not know how to offer you *money* himself; but he hoped there would be no impropriety in his intreating you to accept some jewels. He must suppose I thought meanly of him, if I did not prevail on you to take them. He owed you some reparation for the injury his father had done your's. I observed, that though Sir John had undoubtedly hurt his brother, it was only by exacting a just debt.

“A just debt Sir!” replied the spirited youth; “there may be debts, which the law calls just, that no man of honour would exact.”

This indirect censure on Sir John, is the only one I ever heard him pronounce: on the contrary, he treats his memory with great respect, though he neither is—nor affects to appear—much afflicted. But as to lady O'Bryen, her grief hardly knows any bounds. God forgive me, for suspecting her of a little hypocrisy. Yet, perhaps,  
I wrong



I wrong her:—when a tender connexion is broken, the memory retains and exaggerates all the advantages and pleasures of it; and the anxieties are totally forgotten. Many a person, I believe, has unaffectedly wept for a relation they would not wish to recall to life.

Sir Francis has brought a friend with him from Italy. He is a Frenchman; but has none of that vivacity, which is supposed to characterise his nation: he rather suits our ideas of the Spaniards;—grave, stately, and reserved. Is it not something surprising, that O'Bryen, whose temper is warm, frank, and sprightly, should chuse a man of so opposite a character for his bosom friend? It would be hard to tell by what sympathy they are so closely united. The chevalier du Mornai has a fine understanding; has thought, read, and seen a great deal: but the qualities of the heart are more necessary to excite and preserve affection, than those of the head. I know, however, I am too apt to judge,—though I am seldom mistaken in judging—of the interior by the exterior. The coldness of du Mornai's

Mornai's manners, is perhaps the result of misfortunes: if so, his reserved behaviour does not disqualify him for friendship, though it must prove an obstacle to his forming it.

May I ask you, my sweet girl, what is the meaning your aunt does not shew me your letters, as she used to do; but only reads me passages here and there? And I observe, neither these passages, nor the letters you write to me, are dictated by your usual sprightliness. Ah! Valeria, I suspect — How often have I told you, that the little deity would, some time or other, claim his rightful sovereignty over your rebellious heart? But why may not I be trusted as well as Mrs. Chetwynd? Believe me, she cannot be more tenderly interested in any thing that concerns you than I am. I do not recommend my sex in general to the confidence of your's:—men, to say the truth, are rough, gross, and insensible creature; but I am willing to think, that your conversation, and so many years passed in the society of my Caroline, must have polished my manners, and softened my heart.

Sure,

Sure, my love, you are not afraid of my raillery. If I have joked with you upon this or that admirer, 'twas only because I knew you were indifferent to them. I do love to be merry myself, and to make others so; but never at the expence of any one's feelings:—when a jest becomes ill-natured, it is no longer a jest to me. My dearest Valeria, if you will admit me into your confidence, I shall esteem it as the highest proof you can give me of your friendship;—perhaps, too, it may be some way in my power to serve you:—but if you chuse to exclude me, you have nothing to do but to pass over this part of my letter without notice. I shall not think I have a shadow of right to be offended;—I shall acquiesce in silence;—I shall be convinced you are actuated in this case, as in every other, by the best and properest motives. Nor need you fear that I will endeavour to find out any thing from your aunt. I never expect, nor wish, *my* friends to betray *theirs* to me.

When may we expect to see you? I have no patience with the dilatoriness of these Domvilles.

Other

Other men may tell you what they will,  
 Valeria; but, positively, your complexion  
 is so far from disgracing the lily or the rose,  
 —your breath so little steals their sweets,—  
 that my flowers blow not half so fair in  
 your absence. Come, charmer, and re-  
 store them their colour and fragrance:—  
 come, and bring smiling peace, and sweet  
 social joys, to your fond uncle,

CHARLES CHETWYND.



## TO MISS ORMSBY.

I WANTED to speak to you, Hannah, and intended to call at my father's this morning for that purpose:—am prevented, and therefore *take this method of informing you, &c.*

I abhor the part of a censor, but shall act it for your benefit.—You are wretchedly imprudent to suffer your passion for that Webster to transport you thus beyond the bounds of decorum. Don't laugh, child, at *my* preaching up decorum; I may do things that won't suit you:—my man is noosed—your's free:—freer, perhaps, than you think. I am strangely out in my politics, if he be over strongly attached to you. Should your connection with Webster take air, you infallibly lose Marchmont;—a divine fellow!—and a title too! Then if wise papa comes to know by what means you have lost him——packed off to the country immediately:——Another visit of half a century to the parsonage;—re-  
member

member the *triste* parsonage-house,—old, snuffing uncle, with his long nose, and long sermons;—our good, formal lady aunt, with her receipts, cordials, plaisters, and prayer-books;—prim cousin Jenny——But there is no enumerating half the horrors of this dismal abode of religion and ravens.—Remember them, Hannah; I say remember them, and be discreet. Besides, you will be the butt of raillery, censure, &c.—You are not of sufficient consequence, at present, to forsake the simple path of virtue: when you are lady Marchmont, do as you please;—yet, upon honour, it would be a pity to deform so fair a forehead. For my part, though I will give my company, and allow a certain degree of familiarity to any pretty fellow, that is willing to purchase them at the expence of a little flattery, I know how to keep clear of crim. con. Certainly, one of you grave, sober misses, has five—aye, five and fifty times more craft and mischief in her composition, than such a gay, rattling thing as I am. How artfully you contrived to make me believe you were in love with Sir Edward!

nay,

nay, *ma petite rusée*, did not you make *him* believe so too? Then you desired me to visit lady Mary, only that you might have the opportunity of mortifying Webster, by your contempt and indifference, in revenge for his forsaking you. I was an egregious simpleton to suffer myself to be so easily taken in. I might have known, either that you were deceived yourself, or sought to deceive me: absolute indifference, and a violent desire of revenge——prodigiously consistent!—But my reasoning comes too late; the mischief is done, and I cannot remedy it. This is the misfortune of being giddy:—one's prudence is mere after-thought. Fore-sight, say the grave ones, makes a very important part of that comprehensive thing we call wisdom;—a very gay character, then, can never be a perfect one. Fly to your *escritoir*,—ransack all the letters you ever received from me,—and try if you can find a single passage in any of them, to match the gravity of this! I must conclude, before I disgrace it by a line of levity.

EMILY CONWAY.

To

To the Right Honourable LADY METHUEN.—

POPLAR-HILL,

LONDON.

AH! my Louisa, how shall I tell you, that the Thursday after next, is fixed for the marriage of my unfortunate friend!—May the merciful hand of Providence turn aside the miseries, my foreboding heart tells me await him. I cannot—and to you I need not—describe what I suffer on his account. It would afflict me to see a stranger, with a twentieth part of his merit, in circumstances of such peculiar unhappiness:—but when the sufferer is the friend of my heart!—a man so singularly worthy!—Oh! Louisa——

Miss Ormsby goes into the country to-morrow with a Mrs. Jephson; a gay, genteel enough, young widow, her mother's relation. She does not return till the day before that appointed for the wedding. Sir Edward means to spend the intermediate space at Hermitage: and need I say, I shall seize



seize this opportunity of returning to my adored Louisa?

— I would have had Marchmont come to Poplar-hill, that he might avoid the painful restraint he must impose on himself, through the apprehension of giving uneasiness to a sister, that is so justly dear to him. He would gladly have complied, but feared Mrs. Wentworth would think he neglected her; and you well know his generous heart never allows his own ease or satisfaction to enter into competition with that of others.

I have a thousand things to tell you, but would rather speak than write them. Expect me at dinner to-morrow.

— Kiss Arthur for me.—Adieu.

METHUEN.

To

## TO LADY CONWAY.

IN what a stile do you write to me, Emily! You are the last person on earth from whom I expected such a lecture. Surely, some people think the folly of others brings an accession of wisdom to themselves.

You "know how to keep clear——"  
—Yes, yes, your virtue stands very secure, because *not assaulted*.

I have read over your letter again. I believe you meant rather to give me a warning, than a reprimand: I ought to excuse you then; and I do.

You need be under no fear of my losing my *intended*. This very morning our wedding was fixed for next week.

You accuse me of deceiving Sir Edward.  
—What! you a coquette, and disallow a little necessary hypocrisy! Believe me, however, the tenderness I manifested to him, was, at first, far from being the effect of artifice. When he visited you at Meadow-vale, I

was struck with his beauty, the easy majesty of his fine person, his polished manners, his wit, his vivacity, and perhaps, in some measure, with his rank. Resentment of Mr. Webster's cruelty, bade my heart seek a kinder master. The apprehension that my unhappy, guilty connexion with him, though known only to ourselves and you, might by some unforeseen means become public, induced me to seek a shelter in matrimony. Sir Edward's charms—rendered more conspicuous by his extreme superiority to your other visitors—pointed him out to my choice. I endeavoured to please him—succeeded—and was delighted with my conquest. I determined to banish his rival from my mind, and give him the preference he deserved: these were my sentiments when he left us. His tedious visit to his old-fashioned sister, his ill-timed excursion to lord Methuen's seat, his coldly polite answer to your letter, his unnecessarily and unaccountably delaying to declare himself to my father,—all conspired to stifle the new-born flame, when the first possessor of my affections returned to claim them. He  
swore

swore that he loved me with unabated ardour—that nothing but the fear of bringing me into distress could have prevented his marrying me—and that necessity, alone, had compelled him to give his hand to a woman, who was not only indifferent, but disagreeable to him. He besought me to visit her,—I had long forgotten how to deny him any thing,—I complied;—found her below my jealousy; and insensibly resumed my first sentiments for this too engaging man. Still, Sir Edward is, as he ever must be, the object of my esteem and admiration: there is no man, on whose honour or generosity I should so confidently rely;—more than this I cannot grant him; nor does he deserve I should, for I am well convinced he is not more attached to me, than I am to him. He is very polite to me, and even attentive; but it is a forced sort of attention;—there is an awkwardness in his tenderness, that betrays the affectation of it. To say the truth, I suspect him to be pretty much in the same predicament with myself,—videlicet, —his heart engaged in a wrong place.



This morning, when I mentioned my intended jaunt to Jephson-lodge, my father desired I would first name the wedding-day; which I did, after some little hesitation.—Marchmont turned pale as ashes—bowed, and spoke not a word. About a quarter of an hour after, he thanked me, in a confused manner; and begged to know how long I should stay in the country. He did not ask to visit me there—he did not bid me hasten my return—he expressed no curiosity to know who was to be of my party—he did not so much as hint a wish for a nearer day.—Emily, do you think my heart can melt to such an icy lover as this? The sprightliness that made him so agreeable, is entirely flown; his behaviour is so grave—his looks, his language, so cold—But smiles for ever play on my adorable Frederick's face; his words are the warmest that ever Cupid dictated:—O, his breath would “thaw the consecrated snow that lies on Dian's lap.”

Bab Jephson has very innocently invited him to spend a few days with her. Don't shake your head, lady Conway; here is no indiscre-

indiscretion, no risk:—his being married, and my approaching marriage, sufficiently screen us from suspicion. But, Emily, I feel that something more than prudence is necessary to secure the mind's peace. I do not think a discovery possible; yet, notwithstanding, I am tortured with the fear of it. Rightly do the moralists say, that guilt is its own avenger. Yet, am I not rather unfortunate than criminal? Is not my Frederic rather my husband than lady Mary's? Of what signification is an idle ceremony?

“ Before true passion all those views remove.”

His first vows were addressed to me: I was—and am—sole mistress of his heart. Would that this declamation could satisfy conscience! O, that I had timely foreseen into what an abyss of sin and wretchedness my first error would plunge me! When once we have o'er-leapt the fearful mound that separates virtue from vice,—how hard is it to set bounds to the deadly career! I have not fortitude to forsake the flowery

path of guilt : why, then, must busy reflection cruelly scatter thorns ?——Conscience, avaunt !

“ My joys are gloomy, but withal are great ! ”

Heigh-ho !—How melancholy the stillness of the night makes one ! The family are all asleep. I hate silence. I wish I slept in one of the street rooms.

Adieu, sister. Susan will bring you this tedious scribble in the morning. I shall call on you before I leave town, if I have time ; if not, you'll excuse me.

HANNAH ORMSBY.

To

## THE FAIR HIBERNIAN.

TO LORD METHUEN.—POPLAR-HILL.

### HERMITAGE.

I WAS in the right to come here: the retiredness of this place suits the gloomy state of my mind. My sweet, melancholy sister, is the fittest companion in the world for me;—my heart seeks the society of the mourner. My presence, too, would have cast a damp over your enjoyments. O, Augustus, beware of feeling my misfortunes too deeply. I shall never be happy myself:—let me always have the consolation of seeing you so. Enlarge your treasure of felicity as much as possible: it must, for the future, maintain both yourself and me.

Harriet is not surprized to see me serious at the eve of so solemn an event. The sweet creature puts on cheerfulness to entertain me. She often talks to me of—of Miss O'Bryen: that dear, that lovely woman is her correspondent. Happy Harriet! They love each other with a warmth



of friendship, which refined minds alone are capable of. My sister delights to speak of her;—to dwell on her praises. The subject gives me pain; but it is a pain that is dear to my heart: I would not exchange it for pleasure.

How did you find lady Methuen, and your smiling Arthur? My warmest thanks are due to her for having spared you to me so long. You will meet me in London on Wednesday. Really, my friends, I trespass on your generosity; but I cannot spare you on Thursday—Thursday? O God!

My anguish deepens as that fatal day approaches. I begin to doubt the principles on which I act. Shall I not do a great and lasting injury to Miss Ormsby, in making her my wife, incapacitated as I am from ever loving her? Ought I not rather to have ingenuously acknowledged my unalterable attachment to another? Yet, how could I do so? Would it have been delicate—honourable? Alas! my error—my irretrievable—and, may I say, my unavoidable error, lay in my inconstancy.—Inconstancy!—I wrong myself. No, Methuen,

thuen, till I saw that angel, my heart was ignorant of love : — that dear, that cruel passion was totally unknown to me. Infatuating passion ! miserable as it has made me, I hardly wish — don't think me mad — I hardly wish it to be extinguished. A fine writer says extremely well —

“ There is a pleasure, sure,

“ In being mad, which none but madmen know.”

Yes, in my very pains there is a soft, inexpressible something, I could almost call pleasure. O love ! sharp and barbed are thy arrows, but they are dipt in smooth oil ! With what idly-pleasing dreams does fancy cheat me ! A few days more, and this bright flame will be dimmed by guilt. — Here, here, my friend, is the extremest malice of my fate. I can never, never cease to love her : and, O, that I might always love with innocence, although it should always be without hope !

---

Good Heaven ! — My sister has this moment received a letter from Miss O'Bryen.

O'Bryen. She is going to Ireland—I shall never see her more!

I am afraid Harriet must have perceived the agitation with which I received this cruel intelligence.

The letter came from Granville-park, where she is at present. She returns to lord Linfield's in a few days; and from thence will come to Hermitage, to take her final leave of Mrs. Wentworth.

O, Methuen, to lose even the sight of her for ever!—But I merit it: I ought to have visited her in London. What could she think of my apparent negligence?—and that, after she had most kindly and politely assured me, my “esteem was essential to her happiness.”—The dear creature!

Can I expect she will remember me with friendship? Ah! no! I shall be—perhaps I already am—the forgotten thing I deserve to be. Shortly may some happier man——The pen drops from my fingers.

---

I have spent this evening in straying through these silent woods, endeavouring  
to

to reason down my passions. Why do I lament her departure? thought I. Situated as I am, ought I not rather to desire it? Just then, I entered a little arbour;—here I was once blest with her society! I threw myself—or, indeed, I rather fell—on the verdant turf. I laid my face on the place where she had sat; and—do not despise me, Augustus—I wept. After a long time, I raised my head, and accidentally cast my eyes on a shrub, that grew at the back of the grassy seat, whose tender root her friendly care had sheltered. I leaned over it with affection:—it looked drooping. “I will refresh you with my tears,” said I;—“but *her* tears have fallen over you—how can you ever wither?”—My sister, the angelic Valeria, and myself, were sitting in this bower, listening to the birds, that perched on the branches around us, warbled forth the praises of that charming season, when nature, like the phoenix, arises with renewed beauty and vigour from her own ruins. Miss O’Brien praised their wild melody, in words as sweet as their own notes. The gentle Harriet’s mind was



was melted, even beyond its usual softness. With a countenance at once expressive of resignation and woe, and a tone that knew its way directly to the heart, she repeated those plaintive lines of the melancholy Gray:—

“To warm their little loves the birds complain,  
“I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
“And weep the more—because I weep in vain!”

Valeria's eyes shone through the trembling tears of pity. She turned away her beauteous face;—“Poor little shrub,” said she, in a low and interrupted voice, “you are exposed to the weather.” Her white hand gathered up the earth about it. Perhaps her fancy, at that moment, drew a sort of comparison between it and Harriet:—“and, O, thou fair and pining flower!” thought she, “would that I knew how to reanimate *thee*! or, rather, would that my hand could thus have timely screened thee from the blighting winds of affliction!”

O my

O my loved sister, how hard has been thy fate ! What could have brought down so much wrath on thy innocent head ?

When this white lamb has bled on sorrow's altar, how shall such an unworthy victim as I am, dare to murmur ?

I see Mrs. Wentworth's carriage coming up the lawn. She has been visiting a sick family in the neighbourhood. I must attend her. Farewell, my ever dear friend.

**EDWARD MARCHMONT.**

To

TO the RIGHT HON. LADY METHUEN.—  
POPLAR-HILL.

## HERMITAGE.

AS I know the affectionate part my dear lady Methuen bears in all my sorrows, I fly to pour out my full heart to her.—— My brother—my dear, my amiable Edward—must he be unhappy? This is too much, ye cruel powers! I have hardly a wish that does not center in him: he supplies to me all the dear relations I have lost—my parents, husband, brother, all in one! Must he, whose study and delight is to promote the felicity of all around him—whose generosity is the source of happiness to numbers—must he be miserable himself?——Louisa—lord Methuen—I conjure you both, assist me to extricate him. He shall not marry her: I would go any lengths to prevent it. But what can I do, unacquainted as I am with the nature of his engagements to her? Advise me; tell me what I shall do; for something I must, and will do,

do, be it ever so extravagant. I cannot be a passive spectator of his wretchedness. Write to me instantly, and inform me of all you know: I am certain he would not conceal any thing from my lord or you. —A too generous a compassion for my weakness, is probably the motive of his reserve to me. But if you are not his confidante, in how unintelligible a manner am I writing to you! —Let me explain myself.

When my charming young friend, Miss O'Bryen, honoured my little retirement with her presence, I imagined my brother's heart was fully sensible of her uncommon perfections; and I really took great pains to incline her in his favour. I was equally vexed and surprized, when he informed me of his intended alliance with Miss Ormsby; which I thought myself in honour bound to make known to Miss O'Bryen. I did so: and reluctantly gave up the pleasing hope of seeing an union between two persons I thought eminently calculated for each other:

Since



Since he came here last, I perceived he was far from having his usual flow of spirits; and though it appeared strange enough, that an event which brings joy to others, should be an occasion of sadness to him, I was so well convinced that I had been mistaken in his sentiments, that I suspected nothing.

I had this morning a letter from Miss O'Bryen, which informed me, that she was to leave England immediately. I expressed my concern in lively terms. Edward hardly said any thing; but his looks were to the last degree discomposed; and he left the parlour abruptly.

He did not come down stairs till summoned to dinner, when he affected to appear chearful, though he scarcely eat any thing; and disquiet, and melancholy, were visibly marked on his countenance.

I was, much to my regret, obliged to spend the evening abroad.

On my return home, I found him still less himself than he had been in the morning. His looks spoke neither contentment  
nor

nor health: he was absent, silent, and almost stupid.

When the servants were withdrawn after supper, I took a chair by him; filled his glass, and put it into his hand: he bowed, and drank the wine without speaking.

"You are ill, Edward," said I.

"My head aches a little."

"Alas!—I fear your heart aches too!"—He spoke not; but sighed—deeply sighed—and leaned his dear face on my shoulder.

"Something preys on your mind!"

"Nothing, my dear sister."

"Indeed there does! and you shall not hide it from me. You have been a sharer in all my sorrows; you taught me to support them——Have I not then a right to partake of your's?"

He raised his head with some degree of briskness:—"Harriet, you can remove the grief you seek to know. I have a very lively friendship for Miss ——". He stopt; and falteringly pronounced—"O'Bryen. You have told me she is dependant; I cannot bear that she

“ she should remain so. I dare not offer  
“ to make her otherwise; she would refuse  
“ me; perhaps I should even offend.—  
“ When I die, I cannot leave her any thing  
“ considerable, without subjecting her to  
“ the censures of an ill-natured, miscon-  
“ struing world. I should be inexpressibly  
“ happy, if I could transfer Miss Ormsby’s  
“ fortune to her. Will you endeavour to  
“ prevail on her to accept forty thousand  
“ pounds, as from yourself? at least the  
“ greatest part of that sum: less than  
“ twenty would be nothing. I need not  
“ tell you, that you must proceed in the  
“ most genteel and delicate manner.”—I  
looked on him earnestly.—“ If you love  
“ me, if you value my peace, oblige me  
“ in this.” So saying, he arose, and hastily wished me a good night.

He has “a lively friendship” for her; I doubt it not; for I *feel* that she has every qualification, both of understanding and heart, requisite to inspire and preserve that refined sentiment. But think you not, my dear Louisa, that this lively friendship is joined to a much more lively passion? Can  
his

his tumultuous sensations flow from tranquil friendship? Why do I ask? He unquestionably loves her. He has too much fire to love with moderation—too much stability to leave one room to doubt the durability of his passion—and, I may very justly add, that Miss O'Bryen is too charming, and too worthy, not to be loved with ardour and constancy. What then, but certain and unceasing misery, can await his union with any other woman, however amiable?

This marriage shall never be, if I can prevent it. I am sorry for the pain I must give Miss Ormsby; but it is impossible for me to consider her interest—or any body's interest—in opposition to Edward's. A hand, without a heart, could not be acceptable to her, if she be a woman of delicacy and honour: if not, she is little worth being anxious about; and very, very unworthy such a husband as Sir Edward Marchmont.

I have ordered Thomas, who is to carry this letter, to set off for Poplar-hill by day-break to-morrow. Let me have your answer immediately. Direct me, my sensible friend,



friend: I am wholly at a loss how to proceed; matters have been carried so far—— But the happiness of my dear—unspeakably dear—brother, is at stake. Nothing shall discourage me.

It is needless to assure lady Methuen, how truly I am her friend.

HARRIET WENTWORTH.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

